Attending, listening, taking time: the quietly radical ethical practice of the filmmaker Jenny Gilbertson

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Abstract

Jenny Gilbertson, an independent self-funded filmmaker, lived and filmed Shetland communities in the 1930s, then, after a teaching career, Inuit communities in Arctic Canada from 1970–1978. Keen to develop a practice that resists the extractive nature of documentary production and a determination to foreground Gilbertson as an ethical filmmaker, in this thesis, I ask what can contemporary filmmakers learn from her way of living with and filming an Indigenous community?

Ethical debate in documentary filmmaking is largely dominated by the protection of the filmmaker's property (the film) through copyright, consent and freedom of expression. Yet this strengthening of ownership cannot deny the very nature of documentary, which is extractive and assimilatory. Gilbertson's approach was quietly different: shaped by the valuing of friendship, community and reciprocity, it resulted in a portrayal of Inuit by a qallunaaq (white person) that was unlike any other at that time.

Using the three experiential events of archival research (including close readings of Gilbertson's diaries, her last film, *Jenny's Arctic diary* (1978) filmed in Grise Fiord and her newly digitised Arctic Sound Recordings from 1970–1978); fieldwork (filming and interviews carried out in Grise Fiord in 2018); and the editing process, I used my buddhist practice and theory as liberatory practice to deepen and develop the ethics – thinking and caring – in my filmmaking practice.

Recognising the 40 years of political and cultural change between Gilbertson and myself, I consider the daily business of documenting people and

place and how in thinking and caring about those you film, you confront and negotiate desire, responsibility and possibility, all within the context of a relationship, a project, an industry, a technology, a budget, and, significantly, the history of the other. My written thesis draws on these confrontations and negotiations to examine Iris Murdoch and Simone Weil's theories of attention and Pauline Oliveros, Dylan Robinson and Salomé Voegelin's approaches to listening and sounding, I consider both Gilbertson's and my own attempts to resist 'taking' from and 'using' the people we filmed and recorded and where this sits alongside our shared overriding desire to make community and kin.

The outcome of this liberatory theory on my practice research is a 75-minute film in which I go 'with' Gilbertson to Grise Fiord. In this I learn about her time there, the people and things she looked at, listened to and spent time with. Using this time between Gilbertson and myself, I present a visual and sonic reflection of Gilbertson's practice through my own and reveal the ways in which attending, listening and putting the filmed before the film can generate ethical possibilities that interrupt the norms of documentary filmmaking.

Declaration

I declare that I have composed this thesis myself and that it embodies the results of my own research. Where appropriate, I have acknowledged the nature and extent of work carried out in collaboration with others included in the thesis.

Shona Main

Copyright

All my thanking

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List of Terms

The other – defined by Emmanuel Levinas (1969): the other is not you (the self) and is entirely separate from the self. A face-to face encounter with the other creates a demand for a response from the self. This can either be responsibility or violence, with violence being the neutralising of difference, assimilation, where the other becomes 'an object of knowledge' (p. 21) made to play roles.

Inuk – Indigenous person from Northern Canada, parts of Greenland and Alaska, singular

Inuuk – plural of Inuk, two people

Inuit – plural of Inuk, three or more

Qallunaaq – non-Inuit, singular

Qallunaak – non-Inuit, two

Qallunaat – non-Inuit, three or more

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1 Introduction

Jenny Gilbertson (nee Brown) (1902–1990) was a self-taught, self-funded, independent documentary filmmaker whose career spanned the silent to the televisual age; filming Shetland crofters in the 1930s and then, in the 1970s, when she was in her seventies, Inuit of Arctic Canada.

Initially encouraged by John Grierson, 'the father of documentary', Gilbertson operated on her own outside of the metropolitan film world; she funded her own films and took a distinctly different approach from the members of Grierson's Documentary Movement, with their budgets, production crews, pre-planned storylines and deadlines. Instead, she took her time filming as she made and sustained friendships and community. This thesis examines her last film, *Jenny's Arctic diary* (1978) filmed in Grise Fiord, Canada's most northerly settlement. Engaging with her film and sound archive, in both my written and film theses I visually and sonically explore her practice of attending, listening and taking time, asking: *What contemporary filmmakers can learn from Jenny Gilbertson's ethical approach of attending, listening and taking time*?

I too did not train as a filmmaker but underwent four days of training through my trade union, the National Union of Journalists, on 'digital convergence' (the creation of 'content' and 'short packages' for online and TV). With these scant skills I returned to Shetland, the place of my childhood, to make a film, *Clavel* (2014), a portrait of the Shetland crofter, James Robert Sinclair. Aware my filmmaking took a slower, 'less spectacular' (Evans, 2012, n.p.) approach than I had been taught, in the evening after filming I would watch clips from Gilbertson's (1931) *A crofter's life in Shetland*. She encouraged me to honour the pace of those I was filming and to make the film the way I feel it. I met Gilbertson, the grandmother of my schoolfriend, when I was a child. One

summer, while I was lying on a wall in Exnaboe, she came to me with a piece of bread and jam that she folded into a sandwich. I did not meet Gilbertson as an adult, but I continue to feast on the memory of that jam sandwich and her films in the eight years I have been researching her, six of those on this doctoral thesis.

I am interested in Gilbertson's long-term commitment to the unhurried, natural way she films people. While neither she, nor I, would call herself an expert or paragon of relationships, as a qallunaaq (non-Inuit) filmmaker, living and filming in an Inuit settlement, Gilbertson deeply valued and endeavoured to make and sustain friendships and community. The reason this interests me is my discomfort at that very thing: I am a hesitant filmmaker, feeling as if I am taking and asking too much of people. I wanted to explore, both through theory and practice, whether a close study of Gilbertson's practice of attention could liberate, nurture and radicalise my own.

The significance of this research is that it begins with the study of Gilbertson in 1977–78 before resituating an encounter on Inuit territory 40 years later. Through developing sensibilities through the practices of attending, listening and taking time with others, I look to find to find ways to think and care through the practice of documentary filmmaking that resists taking from the other, making them fit your ideas and your story: in other words, to stop Colonising.

In Chapter 2, I study the literature around early documentary, the dominant mode of production and the ethics of filming the other, before considering what other scholars have written about Gilbertson. In Chapter 3, I describe the methods I used: archival research, fieldwork in Grise Fiord in 2018, and filmmaking practice and how, alongside an adherence to biodiversity ethics, a respect for Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit ('the Inuit way of doing things')[1] and the philosophy and practice of Nichiren buddhism. In Chapter 4, I consider Levinas' (1969) idea of the other and Weil (1973, 2002, 2005) and Murdoch's

[1] Extracted from the Government of Nunavut website, Iqaluit. Link no longer exists.

(1970, 1970/2001) theories of attention to understand how to attend and what gets in the way of it. In Chapter 5, I examine the practice of deep listening with Oliveros' (2005) and Robinson's (2020) challenging – to qallunaat – method of critical listening positionality, before considering with Voegelin (2019) the political possibility of making work with the archive. In Chapter 6, I explore the practice of commitment through taking time, reflecting with hooks' (2001) love ethic, on how Gilbertson tended to friends and community alongside, and how she was able to sustain this activity (Lorde, 1984). In Chapter 7, I describe how this theory and challenge was used in the ethical, aesthetic and sonic decisions made while editing the film *What am I doing here?* (2023).

This research took place on Inuit territory – literal and digital – and I have attempted to honour this by thinking with the theories of Indigenous and Black scholars. I recognise I was not the intended audience of much of what they wrote. However, the gratitude I have for them for changing my thoughts will be expressed by speaking about their ideas, saying their name, and standing up for the justice in which we both believe.

This thesis involved assessment by creative practice. A copy of the film is stored as part of the thesis. This film was created for submission only and is embargoed until I have returned to the people who helped make it, shared it with them, then discussed and settled on a version that best represents their contribution and my ideas.

2 Gilbertson in Context

Early documentary film: the dominant mode of production

In this chapter I shall outline the literature and critical debates in which Jenny Gilbertson and her films sit. The key texts on the history of the Documentary Movement that I have considered are by John Grierson (1946/1979); Forsyth Hardy (1979); Elizabeth Sussex (1975); Ian Aitken (1990); and Brian Winston (1988, 2008). The periodicals of the time, including *Cinema Quarterly* (1932–35), initially edited by Grierson and Hardy, provide an insight to the activities, thinking and realities of the Movement at its height. The work and experience of women in the Documentary Movement is minimal or absent in its history. Sarah Neely (2008, 2014a, 2014b, 2018), Sarah Easen (2021) and Jo Fox (2013) turn a light on the experience of women working in documentary.

The Griersonian vision for documentary

John Grierson plays a critical role in the early filmmaking of Jenny Gilbertson. Following the advice of London filmmaking friends, she arranged a screening of *A crofter's life in Shetland* (1931) for Grierson in Soho, in February 1932. He writes a review, stating

> For a solo effort it is an extraordinary job of work … it gets down to the life of the crofters and the fishermen, and brings the naturalness out of it … Miss Brown has already broken through the curse of artificiality and is on her way to becoming a real filmmaker, a real illuminator of life and movement.

Yet, Grierson suggested there was something missing from the film: 'I wish she had built up the struggle for life in an epic story with faces set against horizons.'[2] Delighted by Grierson's praise, it is interesting how Gilbertson quietly ignored it and continued to resist idealised shots, both in Shetland and later the Canadian Arctic. Grierson encouraged her to buy a professional camera[3] with which she made six short films over the summer of 1932, and which Grierson allowed her to edit at the General Post Office Film Unit (GPO). He bought them for £40, although she kept the copyright and copies to screen. He then suggested she make a documentary drama, *Rugged island* (1933), which she filmed with the local residents of Hillswick. In 1934 she paid £100 to Kenneth Leslie Smith for a soundtrack – for cinema was moving into sound – then sold the sound version to the distributor, Zenifilms, which promptly went bust. Undeterred, she and her new husband, her long-time collaborator, the Hillswick crofter, Johnny Gilbertson, took it to Canada on tour, where she met and made a film with Evelyn Spice, a friend of Marion Grierson and a director at the GPO. Whilst Grierson never commissioned Gilbertson, nor found funding for her filmmaking, or brought her into the Documentary Movement fold, he did offer her encouragement, which helped her believe in herself.

Ian Aitkin (1990) provides a detailed account of the early years of John Grierson (1898–1972), the son of a suffragette and a teacher. Whilst at Glasgow University his debating skills and Labour Party activism led him to be 'offered a couple of constituencies': he refused as 'one's duty' was elsewhere (Sussex, 1975, p. 1–2). Post-graduate research at the University of Chicago into the psychology of propaganda for the Rockefeller Foundation was combined with a spell as film critic for the *New York Sun*, where he encountered Robert Flaherty's *Nanook of the North* (1922) and *Moana* (1926) and became an admirer of the Russian director Sergei Eisenstein (*Strike* (1925) and

[2] Grierson, J. (1932, February 9). Letter to Jenny Brown. D64/1/3/1. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[3] Gilbertson's Eyemo camera, which held 35mm stock film, is held at Summerlee Museum of Scottish Industrial Life in Coatbridge.

Battleship Potemekin (1925)), developing his own idea of 'socially purposive filmmaking' (Aitkin, 1992, p. 90). On his return to Britain in 1927, the Empire Marketing Board's (EMB's) Film Officer, Stephen Tallents, hired him to shape 'common consciousness' (Aitkin, 1992, p. 95) by making films that projected England (Tallents 2018, originally published in 1932) and encouraged the British to 'Buy Empire' goods from the Colonies (Aitkin, 1992, p. 94). Inspired by the aesthetics of Flaherty and the vision and techniques of Eisenstein, Grierson defined this form as a 'creative treatment of actuality' (Grierson, 1933, p. 8). Aitkin (1992) suggests that Grierson was allowing 'a convincing illusion of reality' to embolden the narrative (p. 70). More recent ways of defining documentary include Brian Winston's (2008), who said 'we are essentially and most critically in the realm of evidence and witness' (p. 10), while Patricia Aufderheide (2012) emphasises its role in truth-telling: 'the form is defined by its claim to say something honestly about something that really happened' (p. 1).

At the EMB, Grierson made *Drifters* (1929), about North Sea herring fishermen, and produced Flaherty's *Industrial Britain* (1931), about industry in the North of England. Both were largely shown in schools, although there was some theatrical release (Swann, 1989). It was at the EMB that Grierson built the Documentary Movement which followed him to the GPO, which he created using government funds. In 1933, when the GPO veered into commercial territory, the unit was disbanded, and its members set up independent film companies.

Grierson's idea for documentary was the betterment of society, as Basil Wright said, 'social reform through capitalism' (Levin, 1971, p. 37). To do this they had to tell the story of ordinary people. But the members of the Movement were not ordinary people. They were largely from an upper middle-class background, with 'double firsts and from Cambridge' (Grierson, in Sussex, 1975, p. 21) and the correct political credentials.

> To start with we were left wing to a man. Not many of us were communists but we were all socialists. And I'm sure we all had police dossiers because we demonstrated and worked for the Spanish War.
>
> (Harry Watt, in Sussex, 1975, p. 77)

This group were later accused by other documentarists of being an elite with a monopoly on publicly funded film (Easen, 2021). Their socialism went only as deep as the mode of production allowed. The Movement's reformist agenda was one kind of man making films about another, with the filmmaker 'always the more powerful partner' (Winston, 1988, p. 276) whose 'stilted and condescending' voice disclosed how far removed they were from ordinary man (p. 271).

Observing the Movement's manifestations from the EMB to the GPO, to the independent production companies, such as Strand, Winston (2008) plots its representation of working man, first as hero (*Drifters,* 1929 and *Industrial Britain*, 1931 by the EMB) to 'poor suffering' (Sussex, 1975, p. 63) victim of social circumstances (*Shipyard* (1935) and *Coal face* (1935) by companies set up once the GPO disbanded). When not a hero or a victim, I would add another conception of working man, that of acknowledged cog (*Night mail* (Watt & Wright, 1936) and *Spare time* (Jennings, 1939)). Dai Vaughan's (1999) 'central myth' of Griersonian film was the idealised meaning of work and the worker, epitomised by *Night mail*, with its camaraderie, common purpose and commitment to serving the wider public (p. 87).

In *Industrial Britain* (Flaherty, 1932) an obvious class system is maintained by aesthetic and voiceover, with names and professional history of the glass blowers and craftsmen but not those who get their hands dirty, the miners and the steelworkers. We only see them in darkness, with the light of their lamp or furnace: the miner stripped to the waist, a primitive figure pounding the rock with his axe. There are 'one million and

fifty thousand of them' (4:14), not individuals, but a mass of small working parts in the wheels of 'progress'. Arthur Calder-Marshall, Flaherty's biographer, believed that, for all his talk about radical vision and social education, Grierson was a salesman for Capitalism (Anthony, 2019, p. 74).

The Movement seized the political possibilities of sound. In *Housing problems* (1935), directed by Arthur Elton and Edgar Anstey, they let their subjects speak. This influenced the aesthetic.

> Nobody had thought of the idea which we had of letting slum dwellers simply talk for themselves, make their own film ... We felt that the camera must remain sort of four feet above the ground and dead on, because it wasn't our film.
>
> (Anstey in Sussex, 1975, p. 62)

That the people were given time and a place to speak was made possible by Ruby Grierson, John Grierson's sister and one of the few women members of the Movement, who, although officially uncredited, carried out the human-to-human interviews with Mr Norwood, Mrs Graves, Mrs Reddington, Mrs Hill, Mr Berner and Mrs Atride. They shared something of themselves with Ruby Grierson, a 'fellow conspirator' (Neely, 2014b, p. 55). Paul Rotha, another Movement member, generously noted that, what female directors lacked in technical and camera skills, they made up with in empathy and care for those they filmed (Sussex, 1975, p. 64).

The anthropologist Jay Ruby (1992) agrees that this film first was 'remarkable' (p. 51), but disputes that somehow the film belonged to the ordinary men and women interviewed in it. Nichols (2001) believes any collaborative or participatory approach rests on a level of open and honest interaction – on and off camera – with those they are filming (for insights into the practice of the quality of interaction genuine participatory

filmmaking demands, see Kirsten MacLeod, 2014). The people in *Housing problems* (Anstey & Elton, 1935) are undoubtedly given space to speak, however, Anstey shows the lack of meaningful relationship when he forgets – or did not learn – Mrs Atride's name:[4] to him she was a 'poor suffering character' (Sussex, 1975, p. 63).

How documentary was made in Britain in the early 1930s

Neely (2014a) refers to the Documentary Movement's 'self-conscious celebratory representations of industry and cultural life' (p. 302). Sussex (1975) brings together a picture of the dominant mode of production by those who started out with Grierson at the EMB and GPO.

Training

> You started off as a messenger boy, and you did the projection and the joining – and the joining in those days was a very laborious business.
>
> (John Taylor in Sussex, 1975, pp. 10–11)

There was no film school in Britain in the 1930s, so you learned on the job. Both Wright (Sussex, 1975, p. 8) and Rotha (Sussex, 1975, p. 14) began making poster films (early adverts), but most, as Taylor did, began by editing. Easen (2021) notes that women helped train production staff, for example, Anstey was trained by Marion Grierson (Sussex, 1975). As for camera operation, Anstey (Sussex, 1975) had a mere half-day of 'trial and error' (p. 17) with Grierson, filming statues at St James' Park from low angles,[5] just days before he embarked on his first filmmaking trip off the Labrador coast. Wright (Sussex, 1975) noted that 'the EMB taught you to do everything' (p. 29). Watt (Sussex,

[4] 'Nobody had been able to bring these poor, suffering characters to an audience before, and the woman in Housing problems, the woman who jabs at a rat with a broom, was absolutely astonished. I got her to the Stepney Town Hall (I think it was) to see the film …' (Anstey in Sussex, 1975, p. 63).
[5] 'the kind of shooting we believe in, in those days, the sort of looming figure above the lens – very significant stuff' (Anstey in Sussex, 1975, p. 17).

1975) feels this was its weakness: 'we were a bunch of half-baked and inexperienced amateurs. The theory was right but in practice we did not have the skills' (p. 36).

Networks

Watt (Sussex, 1975) remembers no discipline as in set hours: everyone was motivated to do what you needed to do to get the job done for Grierson, 'this God' (p. 41). Sussex (1975), reserving judgement on the quality of some of the films made at the EMB, states that what is important is 'the creation of an environment in which experiment could begin' (p. 42). The genesis of work and working relationships often came from the social networks. The Highlander Pub on Dean Street was one of the pubs where the directors, technical staff and other assistants met, bonded, made connections and shaped plans (Sussex, 1975). The pub was a precarious, dangerous place for those working from film-to-film and reliant on favour. Watt (Sussex, 1975) reveals a damning indictment on the group: 'Suddenly Bill was found dead in some corner. He had died of starvation' (p. 60). William 'Bill' Senton was a freelance cameraman on *So this is London* (Freeland, 1933), *BBC – The voice of Britain* (Legg, 1935) and *BBC Droitwich* (Watt, 1935).[6]

Easen (2021) and Kay Mander (in Fox, 2013) both note the importance of the Highlander in the context of women working in the industry: 'that's where we all get our jobs' (p. 590). Marion Grierson recognised that women looked out for each other, using 'a little influence to swing things in the way of the women' (Fox, 2013, p. 592). Fox (2013) argues that opportunity for sisterhood was not enjoyed by every woman and only swung so far or stopped swinging altogether, as Marion Taylor (nee Grierson) found out when motherhood put an end to socialising and her filmmaking career (Fox, 2013, p. 592). It was also motherhood – and the war - that stopped Gilbertson's first filmmaking career in

[6] Entry for William Shenton, Cinematographer on BFI website. Retrieved on April 23, 2022, from https://www2.bfi.org.uk/films-tv-people/4ce2ba7f20b01

the late 1930s, although with different economic circumstances compared to her metropolitan peers, Gilbertson worked, largely as a teacher, throughout motherhood.

Methods

The cost of film, crew and equipment was so high that films had to be planned out and storyboarded. When the writing was on the wall for the GPO, some members established the Associated Realist Film Producers (ARFP) with Grierson and Alberto Cavalcanti as consultants. In advertising its services, it offered

> 1. Advice to bodies desiring to have films made, 2. Preparation of scenarios, 3. Drawing up of complete production programmes … 5. Arrangement for all types of distribution.
>
> (Sussex, 1975, p. 83)

While this made good business sense, it shows the strictures and commercial realities a filmmaker operated within. It must also have been dispiriting for the filmmakers to make a work on projects or promote a product that did not move them, as shown by Stuart Legg's unhappiness about having to make a film about the plum harvest showed: 'I didn't understand about plums. I didn't like them very much, anyway' (Sussex, 1975, p. 29).

Technology – kit, crew, editing, sound

Taylor (Sussex, 1975) recounts the equipment they had at the EMB 175 Wardour Street studio around 1930 as being 'mostly old stuff … a Bell & Howell camera and a Debrie Super Le Pavro' (p. 11): these were acceptable for the studio but unwieldly on location, where they instead used a small clockwork De Vry. Rotha (Sussex, 1975) notes how they had to shoot in the studio at night to circumvent the fire regulations (film was combustible). In 1935, when they made Housing Problems, they required a car-full of

batteries to light the inside of the houses plus a sound truck full of batteries for the synchronous sound camera (Sussex, 1975).

There were few films where two directors worked together (*Housing Problems* (Anstey & Elton, 1935), *Night mail* (Watt & Wright, 1936)), with the standard practice being a director who worked with at least a cameraman and another assistant, allowing the director to focus on delivering the overall creative focus of the film before editing the material. Exceptions include *Industrial Britain* (1933), where Flaherty filmed his own footage, as did Wright in *The country comes to town* (1933) (which required him to lug the camera and tripod up hill and down dale). The Association of Cinematography, Television and Allied Technicians (ACTT) pushed back on directors filming to preserve the status of the cameraman, yet Wright (Sussex, 1975) claimed the trade union backed off if a film would otherwise not get made. Those elements of self-shooting often required daring, with directors scaling masts (e.g., Anstey in *BBC Droitwich*, Watt, 1935), for which he does not get a credit as cameraman) (Sussex, 1975), or scaffolding (e.g., Marion Grierson shooting *London Town* (1933) with her Norman Sinclair camera) (Thomson, 1989). Feature writers in magazines and news delighted in this detail about women filmmakers (Fox, 2013).

Whilst Grierson played a significant oversight in the editing process, directors cut their own films (*Industrial Britain* (1931), largely filmed by Flaherty, who was sacked before completion, is a notable exception) (Sussex, 1975). While editing *Song of Ceylon* (1934), it took an outburst from Grierson ('every shot should stand on its own right' (Sussex, 1975, p. 38)), a night on the drink, and a two-day huff before Wright came back to the cutting room to change and find the right ending.

'There is no such things as a silent film' (Wright, in Sussex, 1975, p. 7). Sussex's interviews reveal considerable resistance within the EMB to the introduction of sound. This was in part due to it being put on by the distributor, but also it being seen as

commercialism (Sussex, 1975). The arrival of Cavalcanti brought some sound confidence to the GPO and Grierson (1936) would herald 'the vernacular, choral, and even poetic sound' (p. 452) as a ground-breaking development. The logistics of synchronous sound, from the cost of the equipment, to its moving, powering and operation, was a significant challenge, as was its editing: 'none of us had any idea that cutting sound was so difficult' (Watt in Sussex, 1975, p. 49), meaning it was used tentatively (and inauthentically: the soundtrack to *Song of Ceylon* (1934) was recorded in London). Yet some directors took to it – and exploited its capacity to enrich the visual with sensorial and political texture, for example, Ruby Grierson's voices of working man and woman in *Housing Problems* (Anstey & Elton, 1935) and Marion Grierson's redolent *Beside the seaside* (1935) and the multi-layered spirescape in *Cathedrals of Britain* (1937).

Resources – budgets, pay

The EMB and GPO film units were both funded by public money and it was argued this 'elite' group of directors got the lion's share (Mary Field in Easen, 2021, p. 498). The success and potential of these documentaries meant that private corporations wanted films to be made to promote their products and services. The publicly funded GPO could not perform this function and was thus disbanded.

Grierson reports an EMB budget of £2,500 to make *Drifters* (1929) and £7,500 for *Port of London*, a 'mythical film' never completed that help fund the setting up of the GPO film unit (Sussex, 1975, p. 8). Budgets for 'low-category'[7] films were much less. Marion Grierson, by now working for an independent company, recalls a budget for £400 for *Cathedrals of Britain* (1937), which included employing cameramen for 'the more difficult pieces' (Thomson, 1989, p. 8). As others stated, they kept within budget as they knew there would not be any more.

[7] Lower-category films were those with restricted budgets for specialist audiences distributed on the non-theatrical circuit.

Although they might have to pull favours to get a film finished (e.g., Watt and Pat Jackson, the cameraman, stayed with his mother in Edinburgh to complete *Night mail* (1936) (Sussex, 1975)), they did not take the risk or pay for these films with their own money. In addition, they were getting paid a wage to make them.

Wright was initially freelance at the EMB in 1929 and was paid £5 for a film about Ghanaian cocoa (including paying someone to help with animated titles) (Sussex, 1975), while Rotha, also freelance, was paid £15 for a more experimental film about Empire timber which was expected to be completed in a week (Sussex, 1975). In terms of salaries, Marion Grierson, editing and offering training, remembered her initial salary was around £3 a week, which eventually went up to £6 (Thomson, 1989): she noted that flats were £2 a week and that living in London on this wage was 'very tricky indeed', however, 'many of them had private incomes' (Thomson, 1989, p. 7). Anstey, who was trained by Marion Grierson, received £4 a week, as did Elton, as they were deemed 'senior recruits' (Sussex, 1975, p. 20), on par with other skilled workers at that time. Fox (2013) quotes a parliamentary report (1937) that stated all senior positions were paid £5 a week (p. 587). Fox also notes that Marion Grierson found Evelyn Spice a job in the GPO (initially as John Grierson's secretary): by the time she was a director she was paid £8 10s (Fox, 2013) a week. Grierson boasted that he himself would only take 'first division wages' of over £1,000 per annum, which amounts to around £20 a week. He claimed, 'this was very important for documentary, the vanity' (Sussex, 1975, p. 75). Flaherty alone was paid £2,400 for the footage he shot for *Industrial Britain* (1931).

It is worth noting that Gilbertson was paid £40 by Grierson in 1932 for 6 films, approximately 10 weeks' wages of a GPO director. It is unclear whether this included the cost of the film stock, which would have meant she made nothing.

Those you filmed

As discussed earlier, the status of the people filmed in these early documentary films and the way they are represented is contested, being used in 'not exactly a humanised way but a sort of symbolic way' (Anstey, in Sussex, 1975, p. 18).

Watt describes conning vicars while doing his church tithe exposé, and using flattery so they would let him film them (Sussex, 1975, p. 89). Made for Gainsborough Pictures, not Grierson, Flaherty paid men £5 to risk their lives fishing in a storm in *Men of Aran* (1934) (Rotha & Ruby, 1983). In terms of having a relationship with those they filmed, Rotha (Sussex, 1975) recalls how he went to the pub with some of the miners in *The Face of Britain* (1935), but there is no real recounting by him, or the other directors, of the experiences shared or any detail of the lives they encountered. This may be in part due to the speed with which these films were made. It may also be due to a Griersonian generalist approach and the way the directors saw their subjects. Reflecting on this, 40 years after, Sussex (1975) is aware of the class difference between filmmaker and subject, stating the attitude was that 'work is in itself ennobling … summed up nicely by Edgar Anstey when he talks about his "belief that working man can only be a heroic figure. If he's not heroic, he can't be a working man, almost"' (p. 42).

Early documentary as a half-told history

During this time there were those who were in and those who were outwith Grierson's inner circle. Easen (2021) writes about Mary Field, Margaret Thomson, Kay Mander and Jill Craigie, who worked on low-category films. With less resources they had to be more inventive with the equipment they used (Easen, 2021). With more attention paid to research the higher-category films (Sussex, 1975; Swann, 1989), this has meant the role and contribution of women filmmakers has been neglected (Easen, 2021).

As members of the inner circle and sometime makers of higher-category films, it is only in recent years that the distinct contribution of Marion and Ruby Grierson has been

examined. For example, written works by Foster (1995), Paskin and Kuhn (1994), Fox (2013), and Neely (2014b), a television broadcast by Adams (1994), and Segui's (2020) online work goes some way to building detail into the picture.[8] In addition, it is worth mentioning the online work and screenings of Camilla Baier and Rachel Pronger's (2021) *Invisible Women* project, who note the paucity of information on the Grierson sisters within the Grierson Archive at the University of Stirling: 'Two lives, two careers, dozens of films, two sides of A4.'[9] They certainly benefited by having a brother who ran the genre, yet tragedy – Ruby was killed in 1940 when the SS City of Benares was torpedoed by the Germans – and circumstance – Marion's marriage and motherhood – cut short careers already contorted by the reality that men obtained the best jobs, the credit(s) and the better rates of pay. Despite not being part of this inner circle, these are challenges Gilbertson also faced, a reality to which the men were oblivious.

The ethics of filming the other

When Jenny Gilbertson first started filming in the 1930s, documentary filmmaking practice was in its infancy. In an issue of *Cinema Quarterly* (1933–34), an article by Cavalcanti and Legg (1933–34) on ethics in film (pp. 166–168) appears a few pages before Jenny Brown writes about her own production – using a 'film unit of ten' (Brown, 1933–34, p. 178) crofters – of her first work of fictional filmmaking filmed in a documentary style, *Rugged island* (1933). Legg asserts the necessity of the director having the 'last word', while Cavalcanti responds by citing the significance of 'collective efforts', arguing that the role of the film unit is 'to bring out some special quality of the subject, and not the special quality of its director' (1933–34, p. 166). Cavalcanti's construction of the idea of a

[8] Segui, I. (2020). The Grierson Women website. Retrieved on April 25, 2022 from https://thegriersonwomen.wordpress.com/
[9] Baier, C. & Pronger, R. (2021). Spotlight: Ruby Grierson. Invisible women website. Retrieved on April 25, 2022 from https://www.invisible-women.co.uk/post/spotlight-ruby-grierson

filmmaker who foregrounds the subject was well timed, despite his claim that foregrounding the other cannot be art (p. 167).

Debates and empirical research in documentary ethics

Nash (2012) acknowledges that ethics in documentary as evolved through the need to 'situate individual moral judgement within specific contexts' (p. 318). Two foundational texts in documentary ethics are Image Ethics by Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988), and New Challenges for Documentary by Alan Rosenthal (1988). The contributors examine several major themes in the debates around ethics: the dangers of representation; the need for fully informed consent which protects privacy; freedom of expression versus freedom of exploitation; the function and forms of documentary and the role of the filmmaker; and some interesting case studies on what a filmmaker should disclose to those they film (in Aibel, Musello, & Ruby's A country auction (1983)) and the ethics of aesthetics (in Antonioni's Chung Kuo, Cina (1972)).

More recently, there has been empirical research into documentary filmmaking practice. The first, by Aufderheide, Jaszi, and Chandra (2009),[10] found that filmmakers admitted ethical conflicts arose from their competing responsibilities: their subjects; the audience; and the film, which comprises the filmmaker's artistic vision, its producers and sponsors. Balancing between obligations to the subjects and to the film, filmmakers employ 'situational ethics': they want to tell a 'truthful narrative or story', but admit this sometimes requires 'misrepresentation, manipulation, or elision' (Aufderheide et al., 2009, p. 6).

[10] Aufderheide et al. (2009) used narrative interviews to create a baseline of actual ethical practice in documentary making to inform further enquiry and debate about the standards required for parties involved in documentary production by asking 45 US filmmakers (directors and producer-directors of at least two networked production who held positions that made 'authorial and editorial decisions') to describe recent ethical dilemmas and how they resolved them.

Another study, by Willemien Sanders (2012),[11] found that 'truth, respect for privacy, and care' of the participant did not play 'a substantial role' in the filmmaker's decision-making (p. 387),[12] which chimes with Aufderheide et al. (2009). Sanders (2012) suggests that a filmmaker's commitment to their film is greater than their commitment to their subjects: 'the aggie comes first indeed' (p. 406). The term aggie originates from a report by Robert Flaherty, who attributes the word to Allakariallak, the Inuk who played the role of the hero, Nanook in *Nanook of the North* (1922), the aggie being the camera (Rotha & Ruby, 1983, p. 32).

I have contrasted this with the writings of Kate Nash (2009, 2010, 20011a, 2011b, 2012), one of the few to write about the experience of participants in documentary filmmaking. She gives a clear overview of documentary ethics (2011a) and writes about the mutuality of trust and power (2009, 2010), before exploring Emmanuel Levinas' (1969) ethics of the other as a way to invigorate the debate around observational documentary filmmaking (2011b).[13]

Power

Filmmakers acknowledge the power they have (Aufderheide et al., 2009, pp. 6–7), which requires a 'human relationship', to ensure care when representing their subjects. This imbalance of power that tips towards the filmmaker is one of the dominant theories in the ethics of documentary expressed in Winston's (1988) influential chapter 'The tradition of the victim in Griersonian documentary' and in Pryluck (1988) and Nichols (1991, 2001). Their desire of the subject is something Nash (2010) explored. In hearing the experience

[11] While Sanders (2012) interviewed an international group of 158 filmmakers who had all shown films at international festivals, she included no subjects. 25% of her sample responded, showing agreement or non-agreement to statements on a scale of zero to six before using exploratory factor analysis this resulted in patterns which she then interpreted. This model meant recipients' responses were not narrativised and, while the statements were informed by context, the recipients' answers were not (2012, p. 398).
[12] 'The results point towards the importance and relevance of the filmmaker's commitment to her project... With respect to the question of ethics, this commitment is relevant as it points towards a teleological attitude. From the filmmaker's perspective, the aggie comes first indeed.' (Sanders, 2012, p. 406)
[13]It is Nash I must thank for introducing me to Levinas' idea of the other.

of the participants, specifically Lyn Rule in *Molly and Mobarak* (2004), she found that they have a reason to participate in the film – a shared vision – and their own 'active agency' (2010, p. 24), using various strategies and approaches to achieve their own goals. This 'flow of power' (2010, p. 26) draws on Michael Foucault's essay *'The subject and power'* (1983), dissolving the notion of a powerless subject, instead recognising and respecting their particularity and influence. The contribution by the subject, when acknowledged by the filmmaker, along with a recognition of the limitations of their own understanding of the subject's life (Nash, 2011b), offers the potential for an ethically transformative experience for both parties.

Aufderheide (2012) noted that some filmmakers 'volunteer to share decision-making power with some subjects' (p. 371). Nichols (1991) identifies a number of techniques which can limit and negotiate this power, such as eschewing the 'authority' of talking heads and instead using more creative expressions of reality, for example, the use of montage to make connections and ask questions, and the use of reflexivity, using the voice of the director to explore and question 'the facts' and their representation. However, relying solely on techniques – such as showing the camera and sharing the footage, as suggested by Garnet Butchart (2006) – does not substitute the possibility of genuine sharing of power through a respectful relationship. Similarly, attending to issues of power does not end when the camera stops: I would say it begins in the edit.

Informed consent

At the beginning of *Jenny's Arctic diary* (1978, 0:40), Gilbertson expresses that she obtained consent from the Inuit-controlled Grise Fiord Community Council before she arrived. There is no documentation as to individual written consent in her papers.[14]

[14] In 1930 Gilbertson wrote to Phemie Clark asking for permission to come to Shetland to make a film about their crofting life. 'Well, I knew very little about the camera but I did know my friends well so I wrote and said that I'd like to make a film of life in Shetland and the different ways of doing things through the seasons and could I come and stay with Phemie and Johnny Clark at Heylor. And of course, Phemie wrote back and said "of course, my bairn", because by that time I was their bairn, I would be welcome. So that was how it

However, as John Archer (2018), a Glasgow-based documentary producer, recalls, he first became aware of the need for these in the 1980s.[15]

Winston (1988) questions the benefits of 'legally required consent' (p. 277) where consent is given before filming starts. He cites the camera's ability to move closer and linger longer as a power abused by the filmmaker, while Pryluck (1988) notes the immediacy and intimacy of technology means filmmakers can say and do whatever it takes to get the shot that helps them tell the story they want to tell: 'the intuitive and the momentum of the situation favour the filmmaker' (p. 256). Pryluck (1988) connects the right to know what has been filmed with a right to personality, that is 'the right to be free of harassment', which may follow a screening of the film, 'humiliation, shame, and indignity' (p. 261).

Lamenting the lack of protection in law for subjects, Winston (1988) notes that the law protects the copyright that rests with the filmmaker – the appropriator: 'the law is looking for property to protect' (p. 239). When filming an Indigenous community, the idea of filming as appropriating, or extracting anything that is uniquely of their culture is highly contentious. A filmmaker in Indigenous territory who wants to stop the imperialist habit of Colonising must be extremely cautious.

Does the aggie come first?

Aufderheide (2012) suggests a relational loyalty often shifts when the film moves to the teleological 'end focus' of the edit room, where 'you have to put your traditional issues of friendship aside' (p. 376). Moving past the experience of filming it becomes something supposedly separate from the filmmaker and, crucially, their subjects.

happened.' Gilbertson, J. (1981, September 24). BBC Shetland Special: Jenny Gilbertson (S. Gibbs, Interviewer), BBCRS/2/16/3. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

[15] Personal correspondence from John Archer to Shona Main, May 11, 2018.

Filmmakers, with the signed consent forms safely retained, describe their decision to set aside the interests of the 'pre-existing physical objects' and move onto the business of revealing a 'higher truth', a 'sociological truth' (Aufderheide et al., 2009, p. 15) by telling themselves 'it's my artistic vision', 'the film demanded it', and 'in the end, it has to work for the film' (2009, p. 19).

To ensure informed consent, some showed their subjects the fine cut and some changed the film to remove footage that could damage a subject (Aufderheide at al., 2009), because 'it did not ring true to [the subject] … They didn't demand it, but they were right. They were much happier, I was much happier and the film was better because of it' (p. 12), and they were prepared to rescind earlier consent. Yet a 'substantial minority' did not, fearing it would 'set a precedent, de-legitimise the film, and jeopardize the independent vision of the film' that the film's point of view was the filmmaker's responsibility, 'our work and our interpretation' (p. 13).

Pryluck (1988, p. 266) insists that

> The subjects know more than any outsider can about what is on screen. Without the insider's understanding, the material could be distorted in the editing process by the outsider.

Pryluck (1988) notes how a collaborative approach to editing was initiated by Robert Flaherty in *Nanook of the North* (1922), who found a way to show Inuit his footage. Flaherty (1950) described it as being necessary on grounds of trust 'so that they would accept and understand what I was doing and work together with me as partners' (1950, pp. 13–14). Sharing the fine edit became the practice of the National Film Board of Canada following damaging depictions of Canada's poor in the 1960s (Pryluck 1988, p. 266). Nash (2011b) goes further, asserting that sharing the fine cut is essential as it

sustains trust and offers a genuine opportunity for the filmmaker to relinquish their power.

Gilbertson showed people in Grise Fiord rough cuts to obtain their feedback as to their accuracy and fullness, but she took the footage away to have it fully developed and edited by a company back in the UK (she could no longer edit her own work). Distance, technology and time meant she was unable to send a fine edit for them to view before release. In *Chronique d'un été* (1960) Jean Rouch and Edgar Morin used participant feedback as a way to question the form, filming Parisians discussing life in France before responding to the footage. Marcus (1991) and Ruby (1992) question how honest, comfortable or able subjects are to express unease, more so if there is a good relationship and they understand the investment the filmmaker has made. Even the most confident subject could 'find it difficult to engage with the mechanisms of power which include broadcasting' (John Ellis in Quinn, 2015, p. 10). This is more complex when a white filmmaker asks an Indigenous subject to approve their representation – or rather, their assimilation – of them as part of a story.

Freedom of expression to realise a project and the property right that flows from this realisation is an exalted right in the arts. It becomes something else, something more than the people who are in it (Winston, 2008) and the 'primary moral obligation must be [to be] true to your personal vision' (Gross et al., 1988, p. 21). Marcus (1991) acknowledge that documentary is dominated by the principles of journalism, namely freedom of expression and objectivity, whereby 'the dictates of broadcast journalism argue that any personal relationship between the filmmakers and the filmed compromises the objectivity of the film' (p. 44). Using the defence of freedom of expression and being 'objective' thereby diminishes informed consent (Winston, 2008, p. 244). Freedom of expression is also knotted up with the 'allegiance to the audience' (Aufderheide et al., 2009, p. 15), where subjects' interests are downgraded because 'the terms of production

are non-negotiable' (p. 19). There is no suggestion that the relegation of the subject is done from anything other than expediency. Documentaries are usually made in the context of a fast-moving, budget-stretched, highly competitive Capitalist market and often their makers have their reputation within the industry to protect and another project to move onto.

'Or maybe it's about relationships'

Gross et al. and Rosenthal were first published in 1988 and focus heavily on films made and critiqued by white men, films that largely exposed and commented on social ills that were bought and distributed by an industry driven by profit. Yet Pryluck (1988, p. 267) momentarily ventures that there may be other ways of theorising about ethics.

> Perhaps as an emotional guide, filming should be considered like any other human relationship; is the filming practice something that would be done in a private social context?

Nash (2009, 2010, 2011a, 2011b) rejects the notion that the documentarist has power over the subject. Instead, she recognises that a subject wants to achieve something from the film and will employ ways to achieve this. To do so, trust must be built over time, with both parties investing time in the relationship and sharing vulnerabilities. Trust helps the subject 'to overcome the risk entailed in giving the filmmaker access, that of betrayal' (Nash, 2009, p. 193). Although trust is not a given, in ethical filmmaking, it is always sought.

In looking for a way to theorise a more ethical encounter in documentary, Nash (2011b) went on to consider Emmanuel Levinas' (1969) theory of the other. Levinas (1969) argues the other is not you (the self) and is entirely separate from the self. A face-to face encounter with the other creates a demand for a response, which can either be

responsibility or violence, with violence being the neutralising of difference, assimilation, becoming 'an object of knowledge' and 'making them play roles' (1969, p. 21).

Other film theorists have considered Levinas' notion of violence and assimilation. For example, Cooper (2006), who problematises the audience's expectation and documentary's desire to unify, or the status of being the other, and Trinh T. Minh-ha (2005), who looks at the self-as-other in her theory. Michael Renov (2004) argues that observational documentary has appropriated the other in its 'totalising quest for knowledge' (p. 148). However, Nash (2011b) suggests that, where a filmmaker and their subject have built trust, the filmmaker has a stronger chance of being liberated from the tendency to respond with violence, extraction, assimilation, reduction, totalising, or objectifying, or making the subject play roles in which they no longer recognise themselves (pp. 237–238). However, it requires the filmmaker to fully grasp that they do not know it all, that their subject rightfully has their own agenda and their own interests and that, for the relationship and the film to proceed, there must be trust (Nash, 2011b, p. 238).

Jenny Gilbertson

Although the writing on Gilbertson's life and work is scant, early work by Anne Wade (2004) as part of the accessioning of Gilbertson's films into the Scottish Screen Archive, now the National Library of Scotland Moving Image Archive (NLSMIA), is used on their website to accompany Gilbertson's films. This was further developed by Barbara Evans (2012), a Canadian filmmaker active in the London Women's Film Group in the 1970s, who created insights into Gilbertson's ethical approach when she included her in the Women Film Pioneers Project. Neely (2014a) incorporated a consideration of Gilbertson into her writing about other filmmakers, including Isobel Wylie Hutchison and Margaret Tait. Jenny Brownrigg, a curator, considered Gilbertson alongside the early Scottish women photographers, M.E.M. Donaldson and Margaret Fay Shaw, in her research (2016)

and exhibition (2022)[16]. Joanne Jamieson (2019) wrote the first overview of Gilbertson's life and work, locating some of Gilbertson's Arctic films she was unable to complete before her death in 1990. Around the same time, Melissa Larsson and Anna Westerstahl Stenport (2019) included Gilbertson in a chapter on Women Arctic Explorers.

Background

Middle-class, educated, with a private income: Gilbertson had a background not dissimilar to those in the Documentary Movement. However, being a woman meant she had a 'conventional upper-middle-class future attending parties and balls, marrying a man from a 'suitable' family, and living an easy life as a respectable Glaswegian society matron' (Evans, 2012). Her mother had a 'Victorian idea of total obedience in a daughter'[17] and punished any deviation from that idea.[18] Gilbertson clearly had her father's financial backing as she went on to complete three years at Glasgow University, one year teacher training at Jordanhill, then a short course at Leith School of Cookery (her mother may have had something to do with that). The influence of her father, William Brown, a member and pamphleteer for the General Welfare Movement,[19] allowed Gilbertson to seize the opportunities that came her way whilst shaping her ideas on money, desire and work.

However, it was family holidays to Hillswick in Shetland that provided the stimulus for her unconventional trajectory. It was there she befriended the older Phemie Peterson (later Clark)[20] and began to experience an entirely different way of living. Life was harder,

[16] Brownrigg, J. (2022). *Glean: Early 20th century women filmmakers and photographers in Scotland*. Exhibition, City Arts Centre, Edinburgh, September 12, 2022 to March 12, 2023.
[17] Gilbertson, J. (1987). The growing years. Autobiography. D64/5/2. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[18] Gilbertson, J. (1970, June 3). Letter to Helen Thomson. D64/1/20, The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland. 'I know what it is like to be treated like a backward child!'
[19] The General Welfare Movement was a Christian rather than political group, advocating a radical agenda of state self-sufficiency, money reform, the abolition of interest and the right to happiness. William Brown was author of the book *The inherent function of money* (1933) a chapter of which is called 'Our needs and desire should guide our production'.
[20] Gilbertson, J. (September 24, 1981). Transcript from interview, BBC Shetland Special (S. Gibbs, Interviewer), BBCRS/2/16/3. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

quieter and slower, but made rich by community, reciprocity and self-sufficiency. In her mid-twenties she began to visit on her own (she does not appear to be working at this point, so one can assume her father pays for these), deepening her friendship with Clark and others in Hillswick. Neely (2014a), referencing Mona Domosh (1991), articulates Gilbertson's and other filmmakers' move to a world different to their own, not just as resistance, but also as a seeking of something else: 'a place where they could live a type of life denied them at home' (pp. 97–98).

Gilbertson filmed from 1931 until the war: lack of film, the difficulty of self-distribution, motherhood, and Johnny Gilbertson being invalided out of the Army meant she needed to secure an income. She taught in local schools until 1967. Around then she bought herself a new camera and took up filming again. Sadly, Johnny Gilbertson died suddenly, and she retired from teaching. Gilbertson now had time, a small pension and, with her children grown and making families of their own, no ties, so filmmaking became possible again. After making a film for the BBC, *People of many lands: Papa Stour* (1967) with her friend, the writer and filmmaker Elizabeth Balneaves (Main, 2018), she made one on her own, *Shetland Pony* (1969). In 1970, she and Balneaves set off to Coral Harbour in the Canadian Arctic to stay with their friend, a teacher, Marjory Sinclair and make a film about an Arctic settlement. Balneaves fell ill, so Gilbertson went alone – and stayed for eight years. It is there she met Audlaluk, who invited her to make a film in Grise Fiord. In moving to the Arctic, Gilbertson repeated her earlier form of migration, fulfilling the two functions of a new life and new filmmaking opportunities. Taking her whole self to these new places, creating – and taking – opportunities for a different, a deeper kind of connection, as evidenced in both her 1931 diary and her Arctic diaries (1970–1978) held in NLSMIA.

Motivation

Gilbertson's training as a teacher served as a route out from what was expected of her (Evans, 2012; Neely, 2014a; Jamieson, 2019). Gilbertson's educational background would also underpin her approach as a filmmaker, as stated in her Canadian National Council of Education 1934–35 promotional leaflet, when she toured with *Rugged island* (1933) and other short films.

> When I first and suddenly conceived the idea of making films, it was their educational possibilities that attracted me and the very first films, made by an amateur Cine-Kodak, was chiefly intended to show to schools.[21]

Her training to become a teacher perhaps led Gilbertson to imagine her original audience to be school children. However, writing *A Fetlar wedding* (1931), she states that the reason she is in Shetland making a film is to 'enlighten the uneducated masses in 'the South' who are under the impression that Shetlanders are hardly yet out of the wood and skin stage'.[22] She was aware of a deficit in understanding by the wider public of the people she was drawn to film; this would have become more as apparent as she toured her films in the 'south' and spoke to audiences. This connection to her audiences, a benefit of the self-distribution model she relied upon, helped her reveal her purpose. Through filmmaking she sees a way to set the record straight; through showing her films she is encouraged to continue.

This desire to interrupt prevailing narratives is subtly touched upon by Evans (2012), who identified an important moment in Gilbertson's diary entry of her visit to the cinema in Lerwick to see Grierson's *Drifters* (1929) and how she was 'somewhat scornful'

[21] Gilbertson, J. (1934–35). D64/5/4. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[22] Brown, J. (1931). *A Fetlar wedding* typescript. D63/3/97. The Jenny Gilbertson collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

at the way the film was edited, panders to the need of the audience for a 'good story'.[23] It was then that Gilbertson decided that hers would be a 'a more truthful, less spectacular version of events' (Evans, 2012). Grierson himself praised her for 'the best description of life in the country anybody in Britain has yet made', noting how she 'brings the naturalness out of it'.[24] She had confidence that people she filmed were interesting enough. A similar approach is evident in her Arctic films. Writing to BBC Producer Anthony Issacs to request the broadcast of *Jenny's Arctic diary* (1978),[25] Gilbertson pleaded that the channel reject the romanticisation of Inuit propagated by its broadcast of *People of the seal* (Young, 1971), arguing to correct the 'completely wrong picture'. This shows consistency in her commitment – first to Shetlanders, then to Inuit. However, to do this, Gilbertson had to learn, as much as an outsider could, what the right picture was. To educate, Gilbertson needed to be educated. This explains her commitment to living with those she filmed over long periods of time.

Approach

The idea of the lone woman filmmaker, doing everything on her own, seems singularly extraordinary to some: 'one woman job' (Wade, 2012, n.p.); 'the only one-man film unit in the world, and run by a woman' (*Life in focus: The story of Jenny Gilbertson*, Barber-Fleming, 1980); 'a one woman film team';[26] and 'a dedicated one-man-band-filmmaker'.[27] Yet, without the validity of male-dominated industry backing, she, like the Orcadian filmmaker, Margaret Tait, was perceived as an amateur (Neely, 2014a, p. 302).

[23] Brown, J. (1931). Entry February 5, 1931. Shetland diary January–July 1931. Item no. 4/6/10. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[24] Grierson, J. (1932, February 9). Letter to Jenny Brown. D64/1/3/1. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[25] Gilbertson J. (April 15, 1982 and August 21, 1982). Letter to Anthony Issacs, Producer of the BBC's The world about us. D64/1/32. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Archives, Lerwick.
[26] Callaghan, E. (1977, August 29). High adventure in the arctic: Jenny's a one-woman film team at 74. *Montreal Star*. D64/1/56. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[27] Crichton, Robin. (1998). Jenny Gilbertson documentary filmmaker from *A crofter's life in Shetland* (1931) to *Jenny's Arctic diary* (1978), Scottish Screen. D64/5/5. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

Without industry backing the reality of being a one-woman film team was self-funding the films; no crew – and the support and ideas that come with them; limited kit; and no distributor or broadcaster, so possibly no audience. Gilbertson was self-taught, yet this was standard: there was no film school in Britain in the 1930s. However, there were benefits to being on the outside. What Gilbertson lacked in material resources, she had in abundance what most filmmakers can only dream of: unfettered vision and lots of time to really get to know people.

Like Tait, Gilbertson maximised the possibilities of her limited kit (Neely, 2014a). With a career that spanned the silent era to the televisual age, Gilbertson had to master the technology twice (Brownrigg, 2016). However, her self-distribution model became more of a challenge. Working through to her eighties, she really wanted her films, particularly her Arctic films, broadcast. Yet, selling one's work to a broadcaster often meant that things were 'done to' it, such as losing control over the edit or the voiceover. Gilbertson, in accepting broadcast by the BBC (*People of Many Lands: Arctic settlement*, 1971) and CBC (*Jenny's Arctic Part 1*, 1972), meant accepting an always male narrator. In her last two films, *Jenny's dog team journey* (1976) and *Jenny's Arctic diary* (1978), she is the narrator, grounding the film in her personal experience. This also establishes her authorship of the films (Larsson & Stenport, 2019), which are imbued with her unassuming attentiveness, her particularity, gender, age, Scottishness, and politeness; the use of 'Jenny' in the title gave it a 'feminine familiarity' (Larsson & Stenport, 2019, p. 82).

Attention

It is Gilbertson's 'close and sustained attention' (Evans, 2012, n.p.) to the life's work of both crofter and Inuit that conspired to see Gilbertson described as an ethnographic

filmmaker (Crichton, 1998[28]; Munro, 2014) or at least be of an 'ethnographic nature' (Neely, 2014a, p. 306). Yet Gilbertson's attention goes beyond observing them participating in their cultural practices but holds the very mundane of their everyday: we see them 'carrying out their daily activities in a natural and unselfconscious way' (Evans, 2012, n.p.). There is no forcing something to happen or performance (Neely, 2014a). Attuned to them and in their time, we see them express their culture and individuality within the reality of the here and the now. The length of time Gilbertson spends living with and contributing to the communities she films, means she does not look at – or use – them in a symbolic way (Anstey in Sussex, 1975). They are more than parts of the story to her. They are her friends. When she looks at them with her camera, she is looking at them with the warmth and kindness of kinship, valuing their uniqueness and particularity.

Jamieson (2019), in describing Gilbertson's 'observational, unhurried and honest' (p. 112) eye also notes her depiction of the humour found on the croft, or rather a cliff, and in a collapsing iglu. Neely (2014a) cites these two examples as instances when she brings in the 'apparatus of the camera' (p. 306) into the film: Gilbertson did not take Gilbertson the filmmaker too seriously.

Brownrigg (2016, p. 64) quotes Berger and Mohr (1982) on how, in photography, you have to serve your time to be able to be 'intuitive and very fast' and there in the instant. Gilbertson's long-term commitment to be there, to know and feel the 'inherent rhythms of the everyday' (Neely, 2014a, p. 303) was recognised by Grierson:

[28] Crichton, Robin. (1998). Jenny Gilbertson documentary filmmaker from *A crofter's life in Shetland* (1931) to *Jenny's Arctic diary* (1978), Scottish Screen. D64/5/5. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

> I think the best thing she did was to go straight to the crofters and live with them ...You have to belong if you are to catch the details of the daily round which make up the drama of people's existence.[29]

This is ironic coming from Grierson, whose mode of production was dictated by speed, budgets and a disconnect with those his Movement filmed. Yet he acknowledges what happens when you take your time to get to know your subjects. As Winston (2008) said, you are in 'the realm of evidence and witness' (p. 10).

The long periods of time Gilbertson took to develop an understanding of the lives of those she filmed, quietly engrossing herself in the everyday to ensure an 'unspectacular' (Evans, 2012, n.p.) representation of their lives, was perhaps in resistance to the pursuit of the instant that Berger and Mhor (1982) speak of.

Exploration and adventure

Gilbertson's interest and commitment to the Arctic – a place considered extreme, beyond, inconceivable – resulted in her being framed in the press as a 'spunky',[30] daring, 'have-a-go granny.'[31] In comparing Gilbertson and Tait, Neely (2014a) recognises their 'personal quest' to 'explore their own personal connections to the world around them' (pp. 307–308). Like Hutchison, Gilbertson longed to go it alone in the North (Neely, 2014a). She certainly arrived alone, but it was community and the functioning of an Arctic settlement, not wilderness, for which she yearned.

Being considered an adventurer may have won her some admiration, but it rendered her eccentric in her Arctic years (which spanned from the age of 68 to 77

[29] Grierson, J. (1932, February 9). Letter to Jenny Brown. D64/1/3/1. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[30] Barnard, E. (1980, February 21). Spunky Grandmother redefines meaning of shooting own movies. *The Mail & Star*. D64/1/56. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[31] The Honest Truth (1982, June 6). She's 80 and charges round the Arctic on a dog sledge. There's not a grannie like her! *Sunday Post,* p. 11. D64/1/56. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

years), as she was seen as an 'explorer adventurer first and filmmaker second' (Jamieson, 2019, p. 118). Larsson and Stenport (2019) consider Gilbertson within the male paradigm of Arctic explorers, noting she is portrayed as a

> one-person exploration team with perfect capacity to undertake the conceptual and actual labour of filming herself. This kind of independently resourceful persona is also one cultivated by polar explorers. (p. 81)

Gilbertson's early films of Shetland women crofters perhaps provided her with the template for 'perfect capacity': the strength, endurance, resourcefulness and 'sturdy sense of identity' of Shetland women is well acknowledged (Abrams, 2005, p. 217).

Larsson and Stenport (2019) situate Gilbertson amongst other women Arctic filmmakers, such as Jette Bang, whose film, *Grønland* (1938), is a study of a Kalaallit[32] summer camp. Whilst she eschews interaction with her subjects (although the children do not let her escape their attention), Bang's camera moves in and lingers over successive flayings and cuttings of seal and caribou. Some may find this incessantly grisly, but the time and space she affords this butchering creates a more accurate picture of the purpose of camp than Gilbertson could not achieve in seeking to compress a whole year into 60 minutes. I was unable to view Mai Zetterling's *Of seals and men* (1979), made in Greenland and commissioned by the Danish Government just after Gilbertson filmed *Jenny's Arctic diary* (1978). Zetterling – the 'anti-Bardot' (Larsson & Stenport, 2015, p. 112) – plays on the Arctic explorer image, inhabiting it as a woman, serving 'colonial and governmental interests while also being a salient example of feminist filmmaking practices' (Larsson & Stenport, 2019, pp. 106–107). Reading Zetterling's (1985) memoir, I

[32] Greenlandic Inuit.

sought mention of this film. She clearly was enamoured with the ice but did not get past tropes about 'the Eskimos' (p. 220).[33]

Larsson and Stenport (2019) make reference to Gilbertson's age and how she was able to sustain the physical challenge of Arctic filmmaking, yet do not explore the cultural or societal aspect of her seniority (she was an elder in the community), which would have contributed to her filmmaking and particular relational approach. However, they do identify, from a practice point of view, the undoubted lure of the Arctic to filmmakers 'as a location of possibility, of personal and cinematic exploration and creativity, of room to manoeuvre and have authority and support which they may not have experienced in other contexts' (p. 88). Describing the Arctic as beyond, outside the rules (set by whom?) makes me consider whether Gilbertson thought of the Arctic and Shetland in the same way. Both are set apart from the city, operating on the basis of community. Both are devoid of the social structures of class, a constraint of her upbringing. Both succumb, yet reject, in different ways, the onslaught of Capitalism. Either way, these were the places in which she chose to explore her personal connections to the world around her (Neely, 2014a).

The political

Gilbertson first used her voice in *Jenny's dog team journey* (1976), just as she started to speak publicly about the capability and rights of Inuit (or Eskimo, as was common parlance in the mid '70s; she does move back and forth between both names) and their absolute ease with modern life (in contrast to the pervading notion of them struggling with modernity).

[33] 'I had always wanted to make a film about Eskimos, they had haunted my imagination as much as the Hopi Indians, the Lapps, the gipsies. Were the days of the Eskimos as hunters numbered? It would seem so. This proud group is no longer needed in their society as it were in the olden days and their shamanistic qualities, which make them wise and humble, are now ridiculed. NO wonder they shoot each other in despair on those frozen tundras, or become alcoholics or drugs addicts. I called this film *Of Seals and Men*. It was 1978.' Zetterling, M. (1985), p. 220.

Brownrigg (2016) notes how Gilbertson eschewed the 'romantic or nostalgic' in *A crofter's life in Shetland* (1931) by mixing scenes of crofting life with images of fashionable modernity (a stylish woman, in a long leather coat and cloche, dodges a car in Lerwick's Commercial Street) and women's emancipation (fish gutters).

While Neely (2014a) does acknowledge Gilbertson's call to the Canadian government to once and for all fix the longstanding issue of creating a water supply in Grise Fiord,[34] she argues that Gilbertson does not engage with 'the wider political and social issues faced by the communities they filmed', believing it is 'hard to grasp that Gilbertson chose not to acknowledge the troubled foundations of the Inuit community in Grise Fiord' (p. 307). Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay were first established in 1953 when the Canadian Government Relocated 19 families from Inukjuak and Pond Inlet to the High Arctic with a promise of return after two years. Assured food sources were plentiful, they were not, nor were they provided with adequate care, housing or hunting equipment, resulting in tragedy and hardship. Marcus (1995) notes the Government offered and denied numerous motivations for the Relocation, including a rewilding of the 'Eskimo' (to reduce reliance on welfare) and occupation to extend Canadian Sovereignty. Crushingly, the promise that they could return to their homelands was denied.

Larsson and Stenport (2019) also question why Gilbertson did not address the 'historical trauma for which Grise Fiord is known', instead placing an emphasis on the everyday, 'not on geopolitical or colonial questions' (p. 82). Both Neely (2014a) and Larsson and Stenport (2019) cite *Martha of the North* (2009) and *Nutaunikut [Exile]* (2009), films about or made by Inuit 30 years after Gilbertson filmed in Grise Fiord.

Jamieson (2019) goes further, stating it was 'inevitable' that she knew the full history as we now know it, noting how Gilbertson had press cuttings on many social and economic issues in the Canadian Arctic (p. 117), conceding that maybe Gilbertson 'could

[34] In 2023, poor or a non-existent water supply is still a major political issue in the Arctic and in many Indigenous nations.

only do so much … her approach was to capture and portray the here and now … the immediate and real to her' (p. 117). Gilbertson's advocacy for Inuit is acknowledged, for example, in her dedication to 'unflinchingly' film the daily reality of their hunt for food, something her audience may have found disagreeable (Jamieson, 2019, p. 114). In addition, Gilbertson's habit of naming a number of Inuit she films (Jamieson, 2019) and telling anecdotes brings them out of the one-dimensional homogeneity of qallunaat representation. Her resistance to the predominant culture of Inuit representation is also recognised. Her 1982 letter to the BBC Producer Anthony Issacs, asking the channel to show *Jenny's Arctic diary* (1978), emphasises the time she took to film them (over a year and 'not likely to be done again – too expensive') because it 'puts right' incorrect notions of Inuit promoted by the film *People of the seal* (Young, 1971), which she admits is 'an excellent archive film', but one that embarrasses young Inuit who want to 'forget how primitive they were'. She concludes 'It is not right that in the UK we should be given a false impression of these clever northern people',[35] before having a second stab at the broadcaster, in a letter to the Director General of the BBC, Alastair Milne.[36]

Jenny's Arctic diary (1978) showed the ordinary daily life of Inuit as they quietly took for control of their land, their language and the right to hunt and sell seal skins, all while building and delivering the necessary structures and services for their communities to thrive. This ran against the prevailing narrative of the 'Eskimo' as belonging to the past, uneducated, problematic, difficult to manage and dependent on hand-outs, something many qallunaat continue to believe (Steckley, 2009). Brownrigg (2016), when discussing Gilbertson's interest in the day-to-day tasks of ordinary arnaait,[37] quotes the American feminist, Carol Hanisch (1968), 'the personal is political' (p. 117). That

[35] Gilbertson, J. (1982, April 15). Letter to Anthony Isaacs. BBC Executive Producer at the Travel and Exploration Unit. D64/1/32. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[36] Gilbertson, J. (1982, August 21). Letter to Alastair Milne, BBC Director General. D64/1/32. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[37] Women.

Gilbertson used this opportunity to politely challenge the prevailing attitudes of white people towards Inuit went very much against the grain.

Other qallunaat documentary filmmakers filming Inuit

It is perhaps worth taking a detour to consider some of the other documentary filmmaking about Inuit prior to and during Gilbertson's Arctic activity. The Inuit of the Canadian Arctic have been well filmed. Since the time of Robert Flaherty's *Nanook of the North* (1922), a huge number of corporate, museum and educational films have been made of Inuit life, including those by the Hudson Bay Trading Company that Gilbertson first contributed to when she arrived in Coral Harbour in 1970.[38]

Above, when I discussed the phenomenon of women Arctic adventurer explorer filmmakers, I considered two films made by Nordic women filmmakers about Greenland (the first, Jette Bang's *Grønland* in 1938, and the second, Mai Zetterling's *Of seals and men* in 1979). The following three documentary films made by male qallunaat filmmakers reveal how qallunaat in general related to Inuit at that time and how the industry mode of documentary film production further promoted distance, othering and the idea that Inuit are somehow homogenous.

Land of the long day (Wilkinson, 1952) uses striking technicolour imagery, non-synchronous sound and a fully orchestrated, if often intrusive, Hollywood score to create an 'updated version of the *Nanook of the North* story' (Kulchyski, 2020, p. 132). It follows Idlout, an iconic Inuk known for his image on the Canadian two-dollar bill (a still from the film's narwhal hunting climax), and his family as they move inland for the few, but long, summer days where they must hunt enough for them and their dogs to eat and to cache for winter stores. Depicting the 'simplicity' of nomadic life, Wilkinson's (1952) focus in on Idlout's strength as a hunter while the mother and wife perform tasks and the children

[38] Gilbertson, J. (1970). Arctic diary Coral Harbour 2, 19.5.1970 – 30.6.1970. Item no. 4/6/12. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.

offer a glimpse of the future, as well as playful delight (complete with playful delight music). Idlout's story is told in the first person yet read by a qallunaaq, to assist what I imagine was the filmmaker's aim of making him a Canadian hero. However, it has a strange effect. Seeing Idlout on screen yet hearing a qallunaaq voice speaking *for* Idlout, it feels like Idlout has been asked to play himself.

People of the seal, *Part 1* (Young, 1967) and *2* (Young, 1971) was made by the BBC and The National Film Bard of Canada, who commissioned Asen Balicki to 'ethnographically supervise' the Netsilingmiut (Inuit of Netsilik) in a reconstruction of their traditional nomadic lifestyle, a way of life they believed would soon to be lost with the formation of the settlement of Kugaaruk (formerly Pelly Bay). Sparsely narrated, and with very little history (the Franklin expedition of 1845 is mentioned) or context, we see a community tending to the dog team, hunting seal, preparing skins, building an iglu, inside the iglu at night, etc. Hearing a wild track and their conversations in Inuktitut (without English subtitles), their words and thoughts are distant from us. The reconstruction is not explained to the audience (the supporting written material on the website alludes to this, although whether this information was made available to the audience at the time of viewing is unknown). They are presented as if in the days of pre-contact with qallunaat: there is no wood ('Not even a packing crate! In the North? In 1971? I know,' noted a friend in the North), skidoos, lighters, coffee, cigarettes or a Co-Op. In her letters to the BBC, Gilbertson argued that, while this was a valuable heritage film, by only showing this depiction of Inuit, British audiences missed the chance to see contemporary Inuit life and how they can, and indeed do, thrive within modernity.

Finally, *The people's land* (Brody, 1975). This film was made over only eight weeks, but the connection that the anthropologist Brody had with Inuit had been developed over a number of years, while working with Indigenous people as an employee of the Northern Science Research Group and as author of the book *The people's land:*

Inuit and whites in the Eastern Arctic (1975). Perhaps one of the first films to directly confront Colonisation (Kulchyski (2020) called it 'self-conscious' (p. 133)) it uses factual subtitles ('In 1965 the Canadian Government introduced housing program. Eskimos in the area were urged to settle in Pond Inlet' (5:49)) whilst an Inuk, collaborating in the film production, engages in conversation with Mittimatalik Inuit, hearing the impact of their heavily coerced move into settlement life in Pond Inlet ten years earlier to show the experience behind the facts. Whilst one Inuk declares delight at now having electricity and a furnace to keep warm, others ponder what they have lost – and cannot ever have or be – and, finally, the terrible fear that qallunaat may turn on them.

The filmmaker is silent, and we do not learn the names of the Inuit who speak, yet they appear fairly comfortable, sharing their thoughts and laughing with the Inuk interviewer: their words are put into English subtitles. The cinematography is slow and beautiful, with some striking moments, from the stunning footage of collecting eggs to a tender human to non-human encounter where the young Inuk father rescues a fish caught in a puddle in the ice. Whilst the still-repressed issue of residential schools is lightly touched on (from the perspective of the father, the sense of loss and helplessness when their child has to leave home; from the perspective of the son, the frustration of learning an alien language and culture yet never being able to be a white man), it is the wordless encounter when the young Inuk father (33:05), wearing a suit to sell his seal skins to the Hudson Bay Company Trading Store, lays bare the terrible impact that assimilation (excruciatingly described by Thomas Suluk in Chapter 5) and Capitalism has had on Inuit. This film is very much the male experience, while the women, feeling somewhat ancillary, perform tasks. A female elder does talk briefly about housing and health, yet I yearned to hear the young Inuk's wife express herself: throughout she is silent, sitting smoking, sewing or looking after the children. Nonetheless, in this film, Brody (1975) shows some of the complexity of Inuit life – in direct contrast to its earlier

simple depictions – whilst, as Kulchyski (2020) notes, 'undo[ing] the "vanishing race" ideology' (p. 133). It is a shame he did not – or was not able to – make a Part 2.

Peter Kulchyski (2020) uses these films as background for a study of Inuit filmmaking and broadcasting and the advent of the film *Atanarjuat [The Fast Runner]* (Kunuk, 2001). He recognises in all three productions 'a growing awareness of colonial relations and of the degree to which film itself is implied in those relations' (p. 133), suggesting that the most recent one, *The people's land* (Brody, 1975), 'takes this about as far as Qallunaat can take such a representational politics' (p. 133). Kulchyski (2020) suggests that Inuit are better placed to tell their own story. *Angry Inuk* (2016), the elegant rage against the ban on seal hunting by the Inuk director Alethea Arnaquq-Baril could not have been made by qallunaaq filmmaker: we don't have that culture, identity and experience and we have never suffered this injustice.

While Gilbertson visited Grise Fiord, Inuit were being encouraged to start filming. Around 1977, the Nunatsiakmiut Film Society was established and ran filmmaking and animation workshops in Iqaluit and Cape Dorset. In 1982, the Ottawa-based Inuit Broadcasting Company (IBC) was established, initially as a news channel (Arnaquq-Baril, 2018). Zacharias Kunuk bought his first camera in 1981 from the proceeds of his soapstone carvings (Kulchyski, 2020, p. 134). After learning his trade, in 1990 he co-formed Isuma Igloolik Productions with Norman Cohn, creating the region's first independent film production company. In 1994–95, they created *Nunavut: Our Land,* a 13-part docudrama about Inuit history and culture. Later, in 2001, Kunuk directed *Atanarjuat [The Fast Runner]*, the first Inuit feature film. However, in 1977 it was still largely qallunaat who filmed Inuit. Gilbertson, unlike the male qallunaat documentary filmmakers, was not filming to a commission and could never compete in terms of budget, crew, kit or that kind of production quality. Instead, her focus on quality was the

connections she made with Inuit, allowing for a slow, respectful way of being with them that the audience can experience.

Conclusion

By 1977, Gilbertson had lived and filmed in the Arctic for eight years. With a different way of seeing and relating to Inuit, and a filmmaking practice far removed from the industry approach, her starting point was very different to that of her fellow qallunaat filmmakers.

Neely (2014a) and Larsson and Stenport's (2019) writing on another kind of Arctic exploration stimulates the need to develop a deeper working understanding of the nature of Gilbertson's relational exploration. Their writing makes me eager to articulate what I see as Gilbertson's practice of attention: how day-to-day, building and nurturing relationships, she created the environment she needed to connect and learn from people, which formed the basis of her filmmaking.

Neely's (2014a) use of the word 'compelled' is intriguing. It can either mean she was forced by circumstance or others (p. 299) and/or it can mean she was driven (p. 300). The idea of Gilbertson being 'compelled' motivates a need to understand the where and how she generated – and sustained – the psychological energy to make films when it was so difficult, expensive and too often they went unnoticed.

Neely (2014a), Jamieson (2019) and Larsson and Stenport (2019) all question the limits of Gilbertson's political enquiry. However, their main argument is that she did not address Grise Fiord's 'historical trauma' or 'colonial questions' (Larsson & Stenport, 2019, p. 82). This requires deeper examination, particularly around Gilbertson's – and that of the wider community's – possible knowledge of this at the time of filming.

The study of Gilbertson, although admittedly 'white knowledge' (Flaherty, 1995), would benefit immensely from an Inuk critique of Gilbertson's Arctic films, but particularly *Jenny's Arctic diary*. Until then, qallunaat academics – which include me – will continue to read the literature and watch the films from our particular experience and perspective,

missing a rich, powerful and challenging viewpoint from lived knowledge of Inuit life and the history and impact of Colonisation. However, as a qallunaaq researcher with a greater access to knowledge and information than Gilbertson enjoyed, I benefit from the ability to study the 40 or so years of cultural and political change between us. Contextualising this in my study, I seek to articulate what I believe is Gilbertson's quietly radical approach to filmmaking.

3 Methodology

> Theory is not inherently healing, liberatory or revolutionary, it fulfils this function only when we ask that it do so and direct our theorizing towards this end.
>
> bell hooks, 1991

Introduction

In designing a research project that was going to provide the ideas and insights that would help me explore *what contemporary filmmakers can learn from Jenny Gilbertson's ethical approach of attending, listening and taking time*, the opportunity to speak to and potentially film or record those who Gilbertson had filmed became apparent. Whilst I was able to interview her daughter and granddaughters, I wanted to learn about Gilbertson the filmmaker. I interviewed two women, Jessie Eunson and Anna Irvine, who were children in Hillswick when Jenny Gilbertson filmed in the 1930s, but none of those who featured in her early films were alive. However, her friends from Grise Fiord and Coral Harbour, where she filmed in the 1970s, were still alive and contactable. This opened up the possibility of Arctic fieldwork and filming.

A criticism of documentary filmmaking is its assembly line nature, where the filmmaker and crew arrive, take what they want, then go. This experience is similar to some Inuit accounts of white researchers. The writer, Martha Flaherty, then President of the Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association, made an address to a student conference in 1994 (written up in the *Northern Review* in 1995) called 'Freedom of expression or freedom of exploitation'. Flaherty (1995) was critical of the sheer volume of research 'done' to Inuit, some of which has little or no benefit to their lives, focusing instead on

generating 'white knowledge': it is 'freedom to exploit Inuit knowledge for one's own gain' (p. 179).

After reading this, the design of my research, and thereafter the carrying out of my fieldwork and the writing and editing of the film thesis, was infused by a nervousness around exploiting or taking from Inuit. Gilbertson's diaries detail her ongoing effort and commitment to create and sustain her relationships – relationships she considered to be friendships. In honouring these friendships, I could not exploit them. Friendship requires higher and more enduring ethical standards than filmmaking: my ethical framework, alongside the literature, and indeed Gilbertson's own account of how she developed and tended her friendships, offered bearings in the negotiation of this. Friends do not come, take what they want, then go. Moreover, I sought to honour Flaherty's (1995) injunction that I do not abuse my academic credentials but 'use them in order that Inuit and their communities benefit alongside [me] rather than be exploited by [me]' (p. 185). Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (Klein, 2013), the Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg scholar, writer and artist, writes about the extraction of Indigenous people by white people and urges 'deep reciprocity', which is 'respect, it's relationship, it's responsibility' (n.p.). Respect, relationship and responsibility do not end at the completion of the project. They are something that must be nurtured and tended to by continued communication and, importantly, a return.

This chapter outlines the methods, guidelines, and assumptions that I have employed for the production of my research. The success or failure of these are contextualised in Chapter 7.

Having spent eight years of my life researching Jenny Gilbertson, I am emotionally involved with her and her family, who have assisted me with my research. As Patricia Bizzell (2000) stated, the feminist researcher is not neutral, is not detached and is open to varied readings and understanding of her subject's work and approach, rather than one

conclusive theory. This is similar to the definitions of documentary that emphasise how it is always understood from a particular perspective (Maccarone, 2010).

Experiential starting points

> … the creative artefact is the basis of the contribution to knowledge.
>
> (Skains, 2018, p. 86)

Although it has been proposed that the starting point to the methodology is the research question (Skains, 2018), Brad Haseman (2006) suggests an alternative approach, positing that arts researchers should 'construct experiential starting points from which practice follows' (p. 101). I had experience of the importance of *feeling* as a guide in the creation of a piece of work. However, the exploratory nature of this research project would take me to new philosophical, physical, and cultural terrain, all of which is profoundly impacted by Colonisation and Capitalism. This necessitated a greater scrutiny, indeed a deconstruction, of feeling. The three key 'experiential' starting points, which motivated my research, stimulated thought and generated ideas, were: archival research, fieldwork, and filmmaking practices.

Gilbertson's films and diaries are held by NLSMIA. As discussed in Chapter 1, these not only document her days living and filming in the Arctic, they also exhibit an extraordinary level of detail on her practice of attention. During my doctoral research, I was SGSAH Artist in Residence at the Shetland Archive, where I helped catalogue the Gilbertson collection and digitise her Arctic sound recordings. The intimacy I gained with her collection, particularly her sound recordings,[39] began an engagement with an aspect

[39] These recordings included GF3 (the English spelling lesson in the classroom); GF16 (Larry Audlaluk 'an Eskimo speaking English' pretending to carry out an interview while fiddling with the tape recorder); and the various recording throughout of utility trucks, snowploughs, skidoos and types of guns being fired. JGASR GF3. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

of her practice that I had previously overlooked. The exercise of recording is evidence of a practice of attention: how you think about the other and how you create space for them. The choice of what to record (and what not to) is an insight into the recorder's thinking and, in this context (*qaullunaaq* recording an Inuk), the political choices they make. This began to stir several ethical and aesthetic possibilities in how to approach what came next. This was my fieldwork in the Arctic, where I would meet and hopefully learn from Gilbertson's friends and use her film, recordings and diary to enable a visual and sonic exploration of Grise Fiord and Gilbertson's ways of working.

Research ethics as a dynamic resource

As discussed in Chapter 2, the consideration of ethics in industry documentary filmmaking (as opposed to the independent, DIY kind of filmmaking Gilbertson and I are involved in) is often reduced to the signing of the consent or release form before you get on with the business of filming (Maccarone, 2010; Aufderheide et al., 2009). In this project I wanted the ethics not to be an event but to drive the conceptual, methodological, practical, creative, and reflective/reflexive processes. The idea was to use an ethical framework, not as a hindrance to creativity or action, but as a dynamic resource to nourish the integrity of my thinking, communication, aesthetic envisioning, filmmaking behaviour and decision-making while editing.

As in all academic research, I had to adhere to the ethical requirements of my institution. I did this by applying to the General University Ethics Panel (approved in April, 2018, see Appendix 1) to show that I had a robust framework for my conduct and decision-making practices during my research. In preparation for this, and in light of the

ethnographic nature of my research, I reviewed the principles of the American Anthropological Society's (2012) Principles of Professional Responsibility.[40]

Additional clearance was required and obtained from the Nunavut Research Institute (Scientific Research License granted July, 2018, see Appendix 2), which heightened my awareness of how my research would be seen and assessed by a body only too familiar with qallunaat research agendas. This particular scrutiny did much to challenge my language and the ideas behind it. Reading my motivations and objectives and trying to imagine how the marginalised Inuk described by Martha Flaherty might perceive this project, it put my research and ego into perspective. This was not vital research for Inuit. I accept that. Nonetheless, the integrity of my conduct towards Inuit as I respectfully carried out my research was vital.

Tunón, Kvarnström and Lerner (2016), exploring ethics in Indigenous research, compared a number of ethical guidelines and examined those of the International Society of Ethnobiology's Code of Ethics (ISE, 2006). The study of ethnobiology is the study of the dynamic relationship between humans and the natural world that respects all of these – people, biota, and environment – equally.[41]

Alongside the consideration of the ISE Code (2006), I examined Inuit ethics, the philosophical principles of Inuit traditional knowledge, known as Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ):

[40] As articulated in the American Anthropological Society's Principles of Professional Responsibility (2012): 'Do no harm; Be open and honest regarding your work; Obtain informed consent and necessary permissions; Weigh competing ethical obligations due collaborators and affected parties; Make your results accessible; Protect and preserve your records; Maintain respectful and ethical professional relationships.' See: http://ethics.americananthro.org/category/statement/

[41] The ISE recognises 'the loss of traditional, local, and indigenous knowledge, and the effects of that loss on biological, cultural, and linguistic diversity' (International Society of Ethnobiology, 2021, n.p.) and seeks a harmonious existence that promotes these. This is reflected in the substantive content of two important instruments in Western policy and research relations with Indigenous communities: the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (1992), and the United Nations Declaration on the Right of Indigenous Peoples (2007). These both challenge the dominant mentality of Western (capitalist and colonist) interests and promote a shift in the power dynamic when researchers engage with Indigenous people.

> Though we tend to think of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit almost exclusively as traditional knowledge, it is more properly defined as, "The Inuit way of doing things: the past, present and future knowledge, experience and values of Inuit Society".
>
> IQ Task Force, August 2002[42]

> Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit embraces all aspects of traditional Inuit culture, including values, worldview, language, social organization, knowledge, life skills, perceptions and expectations.
>
> Louis Tapardjuk, Nunavut Social Development Council (1998)[43]

The teaching and application of IQ, now part of the Nunavut curriculum (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007), is done with the aim of inunnguiniq, the making of a wise, strong, capable human being (Karetak, Tester & Tagalik, 2017).

IQ's four guiding principles are Maligarjuat or 'big things that must be followed', which are working for the common good, living in respectful relationships, maintaining harmony, and planning for the future (Karetak et al., 2017, p. 3). While the four Maligarjuat are Inuit natural laws, there are eight Inuit Piqujangit: Inuuqatigiitsiarniq, showing respect and a caring attitude towards others; Tunnganarniq, fostering good spirit by being welcoming, open and inclusive; Piliriqatigiinniq, working together for a common purpose; Avatittinnik kamatsiarniq, respect and care for the land, animals and the environment; Pilimmaksarniq, the development of skills through practice, effort and action; Qanuqtuurunnarniq, being innovative and resourceful and solving problems; Aajiqatigiigniq, decision-making through discussion and consensus; and Pijitsirniq, to

[42] Extracted from the Government of Nunavut website, Iqaluit. Link no longer exists.
[43] Report of the Nunavut Traditional Knowledge Conference, Igloolik, March 20-24, Igloolik, Nunavut Social Development Council.

serve and provide for family, community, or both (Karetak et al., 2017; Nunavut Department of Education, 2007). These are principles passed down by elders using context and storytelling and within a relationship of love and protection and are therefore learned through experience. I have not been able to learn about these in this way and therefore acknowledge that this makes them theoretical rather than lived ethics.

There are some similarities in the ISE's (2006) principles and the concepts behind Inuit Piqujangit. For example, the ISE 4 Principle 4 of traditional guardianship, ISE 9 Principle of respect, and ISE 10 Principle of active protection, resonate with Inuuqatigiitsiarniq (showing respect and a caring attitude for others) and Avatittinnik kamatsiarniq (respect and care for the land, animals, and the environment). The ISE 12 Principle of reciprocity, mutual benefit, and equitable sharing, chimes with Tunnganarniq (fostering good spirit by being open, welcoming, and inclusive) and Pijitsirniq (serving and providing for family, community, or both). The ISE 5 Principle of active participation aligns with Aajiiqatigiinniq (decision-making through discussion and consensus). The ISE 13 Principle of supporting Indigenous research and ISE 16 Principle of acknowledgement and due credit sit alongside Pilimmaksarniq (development of skills through practice, effort, and action), Piliriqatigiinniq (working together for a common purpose), and Qanuqtuurniq (being innovative and resourceful). The underlying principle in the ISE Code of Ethics (2006) is that of mindfulness: 'a continual willingness to evaluate one's own understandings, actions, and responsibilities to others' (ISE, 2006, n.p.). Whilst I am nervous about reducing Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, the practice of mindfulness is inherent in the four Maligarjuat (working for the common good, living in respectful relationships, maintaining harmony, and planning for the future) (Karetak et al., 2017) and practiced by adherence to the aforementioned eight Piqujangit. These ethical guidelines and principles stimulated my research, offering something to turn to and, when facing ethical dilemmas, something to synthesise with my buddhist practice.

Working independently and outside of academic strictures, Gilbertson did not appear to have used an express code of ethics, or even consent forms, although clearly believed that obtaining Inuit consent was essential. As Chapter 2 explored, similar to Robert Flaherty's filming of *Nanook of the North* (1922), Gilbertson sought an ongoing consensus, for example by sharing her footage with those she filmed.[44]

In light of the debates around this issue, in my original research plan I had intended to go further and examine the possibilities and limitations of the filmmaking approach of Rouch and Morin in *Chronique d'un été* (1961) and return to Grise Fiord to show a cut of the film I had made of their community and – with their consent – record their response and our discussion. Thereafter, I would explore their views, critically engage with them and honour them with a reflexive re-edit that would best respond to the ethical issues raised. The Covid pandemic and a ban on non-Canadian-national entry to Canada until September 2021 made this impossible. This resulted in me changing the focus of my thesis and my film. My commitment to sharing the working edit with my participants in Grise Fiord, however, remains unchanged. Therefore, following submission, the film will be embargoed until I can return with it to Grise Fiord and fulfil what I feel is an ethical imperative.

Know thyself and those who travel with you

> Art, literary, music, and film analysts examine, dissect, and even deconstruct the art that we create in order to study culture and humanity, pulling the techniques and references and motivations apart to develop knowledge of how works of art relate to the culture and society in which

[44] 'The 200 ft of Grise Fiord film, rough edited, was very well received by the folk here last week. They have been waiting to see it for some time.' Gilbertson, J. (1978, March 16). Letter from Grise Fiord to her grandsons, Hansen, Ivar, and Alan Black. D64/1/28. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

> they are produced, as well as to the development of particular art forms over time. Practice-related researchers push this examination into a more direct and intimate sphere, observing and analysing themselves as they engage in the act of creation, rather than relying solely on dissection of the art after the fact.
>
> (Skains, 2018, p. 84)

This is the ambition of those who create. Stuart Hall (1997) wrote that 'we all write and speak from a particular place and time, from a history and a culture which is specific' (p. 35). The method I used to understand what history and culture I write and speak from was what Antonio Gramsci (1999) called an 'Inventory of Traces',[45] the residue of historical processes in your lifetime that influence and shape your identity and politics. I considered making this part of the thesis – perhaps, a short film to show the influences and long-term workings of the filmmaker's mind – but quickly realised this process had the potential to be a seriously distracting piece of work. Presented as part of a conference paper, it became part of a wider consideration of my self-reflective practices.[46]

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[45] In Edmundson (1993), Edward Said discusses his own translation of Gramsci's (1999) *Prison Notebooks* and stresses that 'the starting point of critical elaboration is the consciousness of what one really is, is 'knowing thyself' as a product of the historical processes to date, that has deposited in you an infinity of traces, without leaving an inventory. Therefore, it is imperative at the outset to compile such an inventory' (Said, in Edmundson, 1993, p. 111). Using Edward Said's critical auto/biographical methodology, I created an acknowledgment 'of things learned or understood especially where they are apparently insignificant, non-existent and unworthy of attention' (Said, 2005, p. 70).

[46] The events in my inventory of traces illustrates the mediations that contribute to my becoming a thinking and caring filmmaker, practicing connecting with the other and the world beyond: A middle child of five (with one sister and three brothers) born to a secretary and a helicopter engineer/mountain rescue man, who met through their shared love of hills and mountains. I was a sister who wanted to be a brother; the Brownies; myxomatosis; the women of Greenham Common; the rupture of leaving Shetland; the death of my nana; the murder of Susan Maxwell and Caroline Hogg; giant hogweed; the Miner's strike; getting beaten up (four times); fighting back; moving to Dundee; working on *Jackie*, a teen magazine; working regularly in London; becoming a buddhist; making Italian kin; the Timex strike; going to University of Dundee to study law – with a grant; the death of my brother, a climber; my election to Dundee City council; a Labour Government; rejection of a legal career for a job in the newly created Scottish Parliament; becoming the owner of a 'boucht hoose' (bought house); the sudden death of one my true loves; the death of my papa; the illegal war on Iraq; leaving the Labour party; the murder of Emma Caldwell; a return to writing, mostly about Italy and Scotland; the sudden death of my mother; beginning to make films; returning to Shetland to make *Clavel*; the peaceful death of my father; researching Jenny Gilbertson before commencing doctoral study of her approach. I have been able to identify my early emulation (as a sister of three brothers), compromise, occasional capitulation (working in the paternalistic company D.C. Thomson), and later respectful resistance to the patriarchy (interestingly not as a Trade Unionist and Labour activist, but whilst working as a

Entering the discourses of Academia after having lived some of them also contributed to my own self-awareness and viewing my life circumstances and choices through critical-feminist (Cifor & Wood, 2017), anti-racist, post-Colonial and anti-Capitalist lenses.

The role of my buddhist practice is central to the way I think and conduct myself. 'Observing the mind' (Writings of Nichiren Daishonin 1: 39) 'to perceive the true nature of one's own life' (p. 378) has been the purpose of 35 years of practice as a follower of Nichiren Daishonin's buddhism.[47] Keys texts, or gosho, by Nichiren can be found in the two volumes of the *Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin.* Daisaku Ikeda (2016) the President of Sokka Gakkai International since 1952, has offered commentary and recontextualised Nichiren's writings to situate them in the 20th and 21st centuries. The core of the teachings is that everyone has the potential to be a buddha: you invoke your buddhahood by chanting *nam myoho renge kyo,* a sonic meditation that increases and deepens connection to others and the wider world, and strengthens life condition. Ikeda (2016), when speaking about recognising other people's buddhahood, and therefore your own, uses the expression 'cherish the life of the person in front of you' (n.p.). Three key concepts in buddhism have shaped my thinking about my research and have synergies with the theories I have sought to inform my practice. These are interconnectedness (which I explore in Chapter 6), desire (which I explore in Chapter 4), and ichinen sanzen or generating potential (which I examine in Chapter 5). These are concepts and realities I

cleaner/housekeeper for a dying comrade); the culture of racial prejudice that marked family life and my rural youth ill-prepared me for entry into multi-cultural London aged 19. Doing this exercise before visiting an Indigenous community offered an opportunity to confront my ignorance and partiality and challenge myself more profoundly.

[47] Nichiren was a Japanese priest who lived from 1222 to 1282 declared that Shakyamuni Buddha's ultimate sutra, the Lotus Sutra – where *nam myoho renge kyo* could be found - as the true teaching of buddhism. This Buddhist practice is not focused on austerity, nirvana, or a removal from the everyday. Instead, the purpose of chanting is stand up within your reality and do your human revolution, change the interior quality of your life which is then reflected in your environment and quality of relationships with others. In Sanskrit *Nam* is a summoning word, a call of devotion; *myo* means to revive *ho* means law; *renge* is a lotus flower, which blooms in the muddiest swamp whilst seeds (cause) and flowers (effect) simultaneously: and *kyo* is a thread or connection.

engage with every morning and night as part of my buddhist practice, meaning the shape and form of the things I need to understand, confront and bring into being are largely in my mentality, although not every day and certainly not with absolute clarity. Like all buddhists, my practice has times of weakness where I become distracted and deluded. However, when I am distracted and deluded I have a way to lift my life state and reconnect with myself and my wider world.

Skains (2018) says 'the most meaningful insights often come by surprise, unexpectantly, and even against the will of the creator' (p. 13). I am still surprised how often my own ethics – thinking and caring – comes from something my parents and grandfather said. They spoke Doric, the dialect of the North East of Scotland, and there is rarely a day where they do not resound in my head:

> Davy Main (my father): Fit is it you're afraid a'happening? (What is it you're afraid will happen?)
>
> Jist see fit happens (Wait and see what happens)
>
> Betty Main (mother): There's a line, lady, there's a line.
>
> David Walker (grandfather): There's aye ways time for a wee lookie it it's no' hermin on'yb'dy (There is always time to take a look if it harms no one)

A recognition of the teachings of your elders is central to Inuit Quajimajatuqangit (Karetak et al., 2017). Skains (2018) considers these kinds of thoughts and memories that enter the creative practitioner's mind as 'intrusions of the actual' (p. 91) that can be either serendipitous or disruptive. An examination of the role that these words played will be considered in greater depth in Chapter 7. Now, however, I shall present my experiential starting points in turn.

The first experiential starting point: archival research

I began my research with the study of Gilbertson's films and diaries.[48] Due to the scarcity of writing about Gilbertson, gaining access to these papers, which were not yet publicly catalogued, offered the possibility to learn how she made, wrote, and thought about filmmaking. These provide rich details of the way in which she spent her time and offer a record of events. They are not an organisation of thoughts and feelings: she occasionally wrote about matters that were troubling her. This means they do not offer express insight into her thought processes or ethical thinking. However, by examining that which occupied her and her conduct and behaviour, I was able to explore her ethics.

As indicated earlier, in my preparation for my Arctic fieldwork, I undertook an SGSAH Artist Residency at the Shetland Archive, where I helped catalogue a large collection of Gilbertson's papers (letters, research documents, notes, press cuttings, etc.), and image and sound files that were donated to the Shetland Archive by her family. This time allowed me to develop an intimacy with what she had written and piece together her approach to friendship and filmmaking. It was through this that I started to formulate areas of enquiry: routines and survival in fieldwork, connecting to people and the environment, problems and potentialities around the separation of sound and image, and, like Gilbertson, the resistance of a romantic portrayal of the 'Arctic sublime' (Renov, 2019, p. 207). Significantly, I was doing this forty years after Gilbertson: forty years in which the political, social, and cultural context for filming had changed dramatically. By looking at the various Colonial settler documents, such as land claim agreements (Grant, 2016) that began the process of Truth and Reconciliation in Canada (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015; Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA), 2014a), about residential schools (QIA, 2014b), Relocation (Hickling Corporation, 1990; Dussault & Erasmus, 1994;

[48] These include all of her major films (except *Prairie winter*, 1935); her 1931 diary which documents the making of her first film *A crofter's life in Shetland* (1932); and her *Arctic Diaries* which are her diaries from 1970 to 1978, the entirety of her Arctic filmmaking career. These are held by the NLSMIA, Kelvin Hall, Glasgow, donated by Gilbertson before her death in 1990.

Marcus, 1991, 1995; Soberman, 1991; Tester & Kulchyski, 1994; QIA, 2014c, 2014d; Grant, 2016), the killing of qimmiit[49] (QIA, 2014e; RCMP, 2006), and Inuit themselves (Audlaluk, 2020; *Martha of the North*, 2009; *Nutaunikut [Exile]*, 2009) allowed me to situate my own cultural understanding of Gilbertson's works within my archival research practices.

During the residency, the opportunity to digitise her Arctic sound recordings arose. Shooting non-synchronously, these recordings – originally on reel-to-reel – contributed to the soundtrack for most of her Arctic films, although I only focus on *Jenny's Arctic diary* (1978). They provide an interesting array and choice of sounds, and within them the process of recording them.

The people in these recordings are from Coral Harbour and Grise Fiord, yet they are held by Shetland Museum and Archive – over 2,000 miles as the Arctic Tern flies – which may be considered, in the words of the Peruvian Sociologist, Anibal Quijano, 'intellectual and cultural colonialism' (Escobar, 2020, p. 86). To make a definite break with Coloniality, the imperative to decolonise the archive (Fraser & Todd, 2016) means these recordings, with the traditional knowledge and the voices of loved ones, must be made accessible in some way to the people of Coral Harbour and Grise Fiord. I am committed to furthering this as a post-doctoral project.

Also within the Shetland Archive were letters, slides, and cuttings, and documents that related to social issues such as health, education (she did a short spell as a relief teacher), oil exploration and Inuktitut, providing insight into her interest and knowledge of the cultural, social and global issues relating to Inuit.

The second experiential starting point: fieldwork

Gilbertson's work is often likened to ethnographic filmmaking (Neely, 2014a; Munro, 2014) due to her commitment to living and filming long-term with people from cultures

[49] Inuit dogs, killed by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

and communities different to her own. It is assumed that the ethnographer will enter the field, stay there for long enough to understand the nuances, capture and document the experience in the form of notes, sketches, photographs, videos, interviews, etc., and then return home to write up the research in a way that tells the story of their experience and the context within contemporary academic discourse and debate through the convention of citation (Berry, 2018). Jay Ruby (2008), anthropologist, filmmaker, film historian and ethicist in the field since the 1960s, in later years, used 'the internet, the web, and other digital technologies both as fieldwork devices and as means to transmit my findings' (p. 8). Gilbertson was restricted to using hugely expensive phone calls, telegrams, and the postal service for the bare basics of finding people to speak to, obtain their consent, and keep in touch post-filming. I, instead, am greatly assisted by technological advances, such as email and social media, which also help me to continue and tend to my relationships.

In ethnography, the gatekeeper is a person from the inside who negotiates access that enables an outsider to at least look inside (O'Reilly, 2012). Gilbertson did not need to look for a gatekeeper. Gilbertson met Larry Audlaluk in Coral Harbour. He invited her to come and live and film in Grise Fiord. He helped her find somewhere to stay and helped initiate some of the rich and varied filming she did while there. It has been suggested that a 'cultivated naïvety involved in being a stranger' (Robertson & Seale, 2017, p. 252) can be useful to an ethnographer. By 1977, she had been eight years in the Arctic, and 75 years on earth: Gilbertson did not present as naïve.

Berry (2018) argues that ethnographic techniques can generate rich resources for a filmmaker. Autoethnography, field notes and jottings, and the ethnographic vignette, offer the quality of having been in the moment or close to it. The 'writing up' of ethnography is similar to the edit. I used the camera (still and moving image), the sound recorder, and a diary – like Gilbertson – to document a visual, sonic or ethical moment and to add something of the colour and texture of it to read, look, and listen back to in

the writing up and editing process to evoke 'a sense of what it is like to be there in the field with the researcher narrator' (Berry, 2018, p. 118).

I also tweeted regularly on Twitter. Ellis, Adams, and Bochner (2011) define autoethnography as a way to 'describe and systematically analyse (graphy) personal experience (auto) in order to understand cultural experience' (p. 273). Social media constantly reminded me that I was filming in a more politically febrile time than Gilbertson, as journaling (writing to myself) and tweeting (writing to the public) allowed me to be continually aware of my power/responsibility as a filmmaker and my ideas of the self. Being on my own in the field, and indeed later while editing or mining my Arctic fieldwork, offered a 'self-narrative that places the self within a social context' (Reed-Danahay, 1997, p. 9), helped to identify the themes that I was drawn to – Colonisation, racism, the patriarchy, and Capitalism, that rage each day whilst helping me form my own voice within the film.

... including unstructured narrative interviews

By reading her diaries, letters and films, I selected those who were Gilbertson's closest friends. With the help of Facebook and email, I was able to follow connections and track them down.

I used the unstructured narrative interview, using Ann Oakley's (1981) writings to inform my approach, employing open questions that led to conversations with exchanges of knowledge, allowing me to explore her friends' perspectives, and for them to take me to the memories and stories they wanted to tell. The approach allowed the subject to have freedom to talk about life at the time of Gilbertson, forty years ago, and life now, allowing me to understand perspectives to an event. I also interviewed her two daughters and two granddaughters about their memories of Gilbertson.

The third experiential starting point: filmmaking practices

I have deliberately placed the development of my filmmaking practices last in this list of methods, as all the other methods in my approach shape it. What is filmmaking to me? It is a way to be, to be with, and to make something that is the start of a form of engagement with others. In using archival sources, I am having a dialogue with Gilbertson (Madison, 2011). Reflexive in my questioning as to what I am learning from Gilbertson, I am opening my thinking and reaching out to others (MacDougall, 1998).

The material and bodily aspect of filmmaking in a genuinely remote region in the Arctic has changed dramatically since Gilbertson was there. Technical advancements and the digital 'democratisation' of the filmmaking process means that filming and editing is faster (I did not need to wait for hundreds of feet of film to be sent to Grise Fiord then sent away for developing), more reliable, cheaper, and, significantly smaller (I could wear or store the camera under my clothes). Following Gilbertson's DIY approach, I filmed with minimal kit and by myself (never saying no to an offer of help, however), with the only fat in the budget used for paying contributors. An honest portrayal of the challenges and possibilities of Gilbertson's and my own way of shooting will speak 'not only about the historical world but about the problems and issues of representing it as well' (Nichols, 2001, p. 125).

Writing up and the edit is the perhaps considered the final part of the process. This period was extended by the Covid pandemic and my own ill health, which gave me cause to doubt what I was doing in this project, in my career, in my life. This enabled greater reflection in different light and dark on the thoughts, recordings and footage gathered as part of these earlier experiences. As my research shifted to deeper focus on Gilbertson, the theories of attention that I examined were applied in the dreaming and construction of a creative project that asks questions and proposes answers that are as much about my practices as Gilbertson's.

Liberated by theory

I fully recognise and respect that bell hooks (1991) in writing about theory as a liberatory practice was writing about black women who needed theory to free themselves from oppression. As a white woman I do not have the same life or experiences as the women hooks was writing about. Yet, as hooks states, there is a power about turning to ideas and concepts to think through a new way of doing, to free yourself from that which binds or limits you. In turning to the theories of 'attention' that I look at in Chapters 4, 5 and 6, I ask them to help heal, liberate, and revolutionise my practice.

A methodology for a filmmaking practice thesis that encompasses biodiversity ethics, Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit traditional knowledge and buddhist practice may not be the traditional approach of an academic piece of work. However, central to the purpose of all three is a deep respect for life and the life of the other. As I push myself and my practice development 'into a more direct and intimate sphere' (Skains, 2018, p. 84) one that turns in a world failed by Western Imperialism, I need to use all the tools available to me and not reject those that illuminate and generate depth and meaning to the process because these reject the Western Imperialist philosophical archetype. These methods give me the tools to explore Gilbertson's connected rational filmmaking practice, which, to this day, I will argue is still quietly radical.

4 Attending

Introduction

This is the first of three studies of 'theory as liberatory practice' (hooks, 1991) that consider the theories around attention that informed my processes of planning, filming, and editing, and which shaped my commitment to attend to Gilbertson. As Chapter 3 explained, the idea of attention presented itself to me as I read Gilbertson's diaries, looking for evidence of her ethics in her thought processes. There is little in the way of express ethical deliberation. Instead, I found detailed facts, events, conversations, back stories. Few sentences begin with 'I' (this is only partly because she was a woman of action with many sentences beginning with a verb, e.g., Went, Heard, Filming). There are some glimpses of her acute homesickness, frustration at her housing situation, and the behaviour – and impact – of fellow whites in the settlement. Her diary is about being with and listening to others. It is through attending to Gilbertson that I began to understand that attention to the other outside of the self that is central to her filmmaking practice.

This chapter begins with Emmanuel Levinas' (1969) theory of encountering the other. I then explore Simone Weil (1973, 2002, 2005) and Iris Murdoch's (1970, 1970/2001) writings on attention, considering them in the context of friendship and the filmmaking practice.

The other and the self

In April 1970, following a suggestion that Jackie Napayok, Gilbertson's friend from Coral Harbour, may be able to help Gilbertson film the local fur trade, she enters the Napayok family home in Coral Harbour where he is sitting eating with a friend.

> After a rather laboured conversation, for Jackie's English was not fluent and I didn't know a word of Inuktitut, he agreed to take me round his fox traps by dog team. He then offered me a piece of frozen fish. It was a challenge as I could see from the sparkle in his eyes. Calmly with an assumed enthusiasm I said thank you. To my surprise and relief, the frozen pink char – a relative of the salmon – was both crisp and delicious to Jackie's obvious amusement.[50]

Emmanuel Levinas' book, *Totality and Infinity* (1969), his PhD thesis, first published in 1961, describes the phenomenological experience of an encounter with the other. We speak of the other as those who are not like me, but the other is anyone who is not me: the other is totally outside of myself (1969). The encounter offers potential of an 'ethical moment': the moment of transcendence where a separation of the self and the other that creates an 'overflowing of all the surplus over being – all the good – that is produced in the social relation' (Levinas, 1969, p. 292). This 'overflowing' describes the experience of being with friends where you feel as, in being with them, your life has opened up. However, even the most mundane encounter (e.g., speaking to a stranger in a queue, an exchange with the neighbour who you believed avoided you), there is always a potential that exists within it, an infinity of possibility, a potential that the colour and texture of another life that is revealed. This Buddhist principle of ichinen sanzen (Voss, 2009) of 'three thousand realms in one moment', whilst not solely applicable to the other but also to the self and to one's environment and circumstances, conceives the reality of infinity and how they can be realised at any moment. I explore more about this in Chapters 5 and 7.

[50] Transcript of unknown radio recording of Jenny Gilbertson, The first adventure. D64/3/53. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

What is it that comes from 'all the good' created by an encounter? Levinas rejects the approach of German philosopher Martin Heidegger, for whom the other is constituted through the self and who is determined by how the self relates to their own being in the world – or dasein (presence). Levinas (1969) agrees with Heidegger (1923/1962) that the self lives in its own little world: dwelling 'at home with itself' (p. 118), an inner realm furnished by the effects of experiences, emotions and thoughts that may be true or skewed, authentic or inauthentic, freeing or controlling. All of these aspects influence how the self looks out and sees the other. However, Levinas argues that relating to the other through the thoughts, intentions and interactions through the blurred lens of the inner realm of the self is unethical. To him, experience of the other is not of the self contemplating the other, but of the moment where the other interrogates the self. Napayok's offer of frozen fish was an interrogation.

Iris Murdoch (1970/2001), who we shall read more about in the next section, shared Levinas' (1969) suspicion of dwelling in the self in modern philosophy and argued that we should be entirely outward-looking in seeking an understanding of ourselves in the world. The ethicist, Samantha Vice (2007), nods to Murdoch's (1970/2001) misgivings about its focus on the inner realm but warns against 'disregard[ing] the very instrument, as it were, with which we gain knowledge' (p. 64): for Vice, the instrument is always tuned to the other. This suggests that the other never leaves you; even in your head you are always turning your gaze towards them.

When Gilbertson meets Napayok, and indeed when she or you or I meet anyone for the first or the one-hundredth time, an encounter with the other begins with an approach: the other calls and the self responds. There must be a face-to-face encounter where the other 'discloses' themself through 'the manner in which the other attends the words they speak' (Levinas, 1969, p. 207). This is not necessarily an express demand (an acknowledgment of their presence may suffice), yet, once made, the self is exposed and

it is entirely answerable and 'responsible' (1969, p. 207) to the other and compelled to respond. Levinas names the other's demand as 'the saying' (1969, p. 112) whilst the encounter results in 'the said' (1969, p. 39).

Levinas (1969) suggests that, until the encounter with the other, it is as if we have forgotten ourselves. But it is in the encounter and the 'consideration of the other' (p. 105) separate from the self, that allows the self to redeem its self, catapulting it into a world of unknown thoughts and a freedom of possibilities and potentialities beyond the self. Levinas (1969) calls this beyond 'infinity' (p. 105) and it is here the self ethically transcends the way we differentiate, treat, and speak to people (particularly 'certain kinds of people') that result in us repressing them and stifling society. When the self fails to meet the demand of the other, the self is closed to the other's potential, reducing the other to the self's notion of what the other might be. Levinas (1969) considers this a violence. While not a physical injury or annihilation of the other, this failure denies them their difference, 'totalising' them and 'interrupting their continuity, making them play roles in which they no longer recognize themselves' (p. 21).

Levinas does not address what happens when the self and the other do not speak the same language. That Napayok spoke Inuktitut when Gilbertson did not was one of a number of factors that that complicated Gilbertson's encounters. In addition, she was qallunaaq asking for help and, at that, a woman. To her advantage was that she was an older woman, in her sixties at this time, and therefore an elder. In Inuit culture, elders are automatically given respect. Yet, Gilbertson and Napayok were both the other to each other. They both had to confront the demand of the other. Gilbertson's recognition of Napayok's alterity and Napayok's acceptance of her company opened up the possibility of mutual respect and understanding – what Levinas (1969) would call an ethical transcendence – which opened the possibility of the next encounter, then the one after, and then to years of friendship.

In my diary I described the experience of an encounter with the other. It had been initiated through social media and was related to the research project, therefore there were sensitivities (mainly my continued discomfort at the possibility of 'using' people and taking from them). In our electronic communication I had stated my need and sought her cooperation, but this was not guaranteed and, even if it had been, the situation required respect and reciprocity if it was to fulfil – and possibly create – further potential. Levinas (1969) did not foresee social media as a way in which humans encountered and engaged: to him, to meet the demand of the other there must be a face-to-face and there must be speech. Yet, electronic communication was all we had and, while useful, it felt limited. Exchanges were unfamiliar (with an uncomfortable familiarity: through Gilbertson's letters and diaries I knew more about her than she me) and anxious, with an acute awareness of her researcher-exhaustion (as Martha Flaherty, 1995) recounted). I did not know her current circumstances or whether this blast from the past was helpful, questions that were hard to ask through text or screen. This was combined with my overriding fear that I was pushing her into doing something I wanted. When we did finally meet in person, the first words we initiated opened up the encounter, but her non-speech communicated so much more (Levinas, 1969, p. 182). It was the language of her eyes (Levinas, 1969, p. 66) and the signs of life: her inhalation before answering; her exhalation as she paused; her flush of colour. I could sense the blood coursing through her veins. I could feel her power. This was something I had sensed despite the synthetic drag of electronic communication: In being looked at with her eyes and with what felt like her whole life made me feel as though my life had to stand up and respond to her very particular, indeed her unique, authority (Levinas, 1985). I wrote in my diary how I moved from one second to the next, not knowing whether I had it in me (that is the capacity to meet her demand) before feeling, indeed relishing, the demand before going back to doubting myself once more. The encounter shone an uncomfortable light on me as I did

this. Whilst we do share some similar familial experiences, I could see my tendency to fall into thinking 'we're so alike'. I could feel myself flattening her individuality and my own. Finding out that she does not quite fit into my schema of the world surprises me, yet it makes me want to be surprised more. Levinas (1969) said, 'When man truly approaches the Other he is uprooted from history' (p. 52). Excruciating thought the self may be, Levinas states that the ethical encounter and the possibility of ethical transcendence happens when the other calls the self to account and there is a self, capable of being questioned. He writes: 'Alterity is possible only starting from me' (1969, p. 40).

Levinas never directly wrote about documentary and indeed was hostile to our reliance on vision and the image, which, he suggests, 'alienates the exteriority of the other' (1996, p. 66). The film theorist, Michael Renov (2004), recognises documentary's use and abuse of the other: 'documentary has appropriated the other, violently deploying him or her in its "totalizing quest for knowledge"' (p. 148). Nash (2011b), arguing that documentary is 'the said' (from Levinas' later writing in *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence* (1978, p. 112)), calls for Levinasian practices that place the self (the filmmaker) in the position whereby they respond to the demand of the other (the filmmaking subject) by 'letting be'

> The risk inherent in representation is that of subsuming the other in a totalizing visual system, overlooking difference, and in doing so annihilating the other. To represent is to run the risk of presenting the other as a "something" to be "experienced," placing the other within a symbolic order and founding knowledge of the other on the basis of similarity to the self.
>
> (Nash, 2011b, p. 231)

The filmmaker must accept the other's alterity and let it remain fully intact, rejecting the totalising urge to deny them of their difference. Unless their presence is an absolute

confirmation of them as they are, it is a violence. Gilbertson's filming of Inuit has a quality of letting be: she actively resisted portraying them or asking them to perform our idea of who they are. Instead, she allows them to disclose themselves without confining them or reducing them to part in a narrative, offering a 'transcendent dimension' in her, and thereon the audience's, relationship with the other (Girgus, 2007, p. 73). To Levinas (1969), the ethical effect of such an encounter with the other is a wonder that it does not limit or disavow them: 'Exteriority is not a negation, but a marvel' (p. 292).

Attention

Reading Gilbertson's diaries one can appreciate a level of detail both in the visual and aural accounts of her encounters and exchanges. Among these was an amusing description of a visit to a family51 and a vivid account of another visit where she ate country food52 with them.53 Spending time with them appears to be the purpose of her visit: those she spends the most time with do not appear in the film. Her accounts of being home alone – writing letters (to others back in Shetland) or her diary (about others), making food (mostly for others) and reviewing her footage and recordings (of others) – are essentially pauses before she spends time with others and recalls it.

It was through Gilbertson's attention that I have come to see the importance of a practice of attention in the filmmaker. In this section, I examine the basic theory of attention as proposed by Simone Weil and Iris Murdoch. Simone Weil (1909–1943) was a theologian and activist whose painful practice of austerity meant she lived and died by her philosophy. Forty years later, Weil inspired the Irish philosopher and novelist Iris Murdoch (1919–1999) to develop her theory of attention. It is worth noting that, whilst both began

[51] Gilbertson, J. (1977). November 22 entry. Arctic diary Grise Fiord I, 25.8.77 – 15.12.77. Item no.18 4/6/26. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[52] Country food relates to locally harvested food, such as char, seal, walrus, whale, caribou, geese, ptarmigan, clams, berries, etc.
[53] Gilbertson, J. (1977-78). December 17 entry. Arctic diary Grise Fiord II, 21.12.77 -24.3.78. Item no.19 4/6/26. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.

their exploration of attention in relation to nature, beauty, and art (Weil's *Waiting for God*, 1973; Murdoch's 'The idea of perfection' and 'On God and good' in *The Sovereignty of Good*, 1970/2001), their theories of attention developed to encourage true engagement with the other using reality that allows us 'not to escape the world but to join it' (Murdoch, 1970/2001, p. 88).[54] Both have different approaches to how to attend and different focuses on what obstructs attention. However, it is their need for reality that drives both their thinking.

Theories of attention do not appear to have been explored in the context of documentary filmmaking and not within the context of its practice. Here I compare Weil's (1973) practice of self-denial with Murdoch's (1970/2001) 'unself[ing]' (p. 91) approach of being other-directed before reflecting on the significance of a practice of attending in filming others. In this and the following two chapters, I acknowledge the more than 40 years of political and cultural changes since Gilbertson filmed Inuit and consider a way in which a documentary filmmaker can challenge the tendencies of qallunaat (or settlers) when attending to and filming this or another Indigenous community. This unsettling 'calling the self to account' generates a more respectful and thoughtful way of being with them and filming their world.

To seek truth and reality

Both Weil and Murdoch argue that being free of the self allows you to encounter truth, which is perhaps the essence of documentary filmmaking (see Chapter 2). To Weil (2005), reality is 'outside the world, that is to say outside space and time, outside man's mental universe' (p. 221). Murdoch (1970) warns of the inside, 'The self, the place where we live, is a place of illusion' (p. 93). To develop 'a knowledge of reality' (Murdoch, 1970/2001, p. 87) can be revealed by looking 'outward, away from self which reduces all

[54] Murdoch, experiencing a bit of a low ebb, describes how suddenly she sees a kestrel and, in that moment, everything is altered and she forgets her 'brooding self with its hurt vanity' (2001, p. 82).

to a false unity, towards the great surprising variety of the world' (p. 65). To Murdoch (1970/2001), knowledge came from attending the 'variety' outside: as stated earlier, she did not have much regard for introspection and the 'self-knowledge' that came from it (p. 66).

Grasping reality can be a wrench. As Murdoch (1970/2001) describes, the ego offers a comfortable place to reside. The avoidance of pain – your own or others – is a powerful deterrent to genuine engagement with the other and the actuality of their lives. Gilbertson was confronted with the pain experienced in the lives of those she got to know in Grise Fiord. She keeps their confidence, attends to the friendship and bonds are strengthened. Former collaborator Elizabeth Balneaves notes the intimacy Gilbertson had with those she filmed noting *Jenny's Arctic diary* (1978) is filmed with 'courage and sympathy' but is 'devoid of sentiment'.[55]

A filmmaker usually has an idea for a film before they begin filming. They may already know the truth of the story they want to tell and are looking for images, sequences and words that represent it. Both Weil and Murdoch suggest you cannot know the 'naked truth' (Weil, 1973, p. 112–113) or have 'knowledge of reality' (Murdoch 1970/2001, p. 87) until you set your thoughts and yourself to one side and start to attend what is front of you.

How to attend

From an early age, Weil established a profoundly self-disciplined way of thinking and behaving that she documented in her writings. Her practice of austerity often meant she stopped feeding herself, which may have contributed to her death aged 34 years old. However, a foray into her thinking could give contemporary filmmakers much to reflect on with seriousness when preparing your mind for being with the other.

[55] Balneaves, E. (1980). Letter to Jenny Gilbertson. D64/1/30. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

Central to Weil's approach to attention was a depersonalising 'method' in her life and work which sought to obliterate one's own personality (and with it subjectivity and determination) until reality was revealed: 'my greatest desire is to lose not only all will but all personal being' (1973, p. 59).[56] This created 'the void', where will and desire and indeed the self are absent (1997, p. 12).[57] To Weil, this void allowed the grace of God to enter, but what might the void mean to the godless? I read it as a calm, sincere, and completely open poise, a patient readiness to receive the object, the subject, the other: that which is not the self. Levinas (1985) called it 'responsibility' (p. 98). Weil (2002) called it duty: 'Duty is given to us in order to kill the self' (p. 126). To perform this duty, Weil's (1973) truth has to enter the self; to do this 'our thoughts should be empty, waiting, not seeing anything but ready to receive in its naked truth of the object that is to penetrate it' (p. 112–113).

In recent years, Murdoch's (1970/2001) idea of 'unself[ing]' (p. 91) has inspired a number of writers. Anna-Lova Olsson (2018), the Finnish educationalist, wrote in her studies on Murdoch's ideas of education that 'unselfing' is a 'specific form of attention that is directed outward from the egocentric self and towards the world' (p. 165). Her fellow Finn, the philosopher Floora Ruokonen (2009), sees this as an alteration on your perception: 'changing the quality of one's consciousness is a matter of redirecting one's consciousness away from oneself' (p. 54). Murdoch's (1970/2001) 're-orientation' (p. 54) of the self is not done for the self. You should not seek 'consolation or unity' (p. 55) (my tendency to find a likeness), 'reward' (p. 65), or (departing from Levinas' (1969) encounter with the other) transcendence. Murdoch (1970/2001) sees this as 'rather more complicated' (p. 58). Longing for unity, reward or transcendence would make attention a

[56] This was in a letter written to her father following in lieu of their departure from Paris in 1942 to the safety of the United States.
[57] Weil further discusses the void in a variety of contexts: 'Void and compensation' (p. 5–9); 'To accept the void' (p. 10–11); 'Imagination which fills the void' (p. 16–18), all from *Gravity and Grace* (2002), a collection of her writings complied by her friend Gustav Thibon in 1947, four years after her death.

matter of self-interest. For Murdoch (1970/2001), all you ought to seek is 'to see the unself, to see and to respond to the real world' (p. 91).

If a filmmaker is to attend, whether by killing the self or making way for the unself, they must look outward and allow whoever is in front of them to be who they are. The time and effort required to employ the practice of attending may seem an indulgence to a filmmaker who is often under pressure to deliver on a brief on time and within budget. However, as Weil (1973) says, those who practice attention 'acquire a greater aptitude for grasping it, even if his effort produces no visible fruit' (p. 59). Gilbertson's attending to her friend Tatiga shows that there is more to enjoy than visible fruits.[58]

What gets in the way of attending?

Weil on desire

Writing about desire, Weil (2002) describes what could be the burning hunger of the documentary filmmaker who has invested – or got others to invest – in a story, an idea, a plan. If only their subject would do or say what they needed to do or say, it will all fall into place.

> The wrong way of seeking. The attention fixed on a problem … We do not want to have lost our labour. The heat of the chase. We must not want to find: we become dependent on the object of our efforts. We need an outward reward which chance sometimes provides and which we are ready to accept at the price of a deformation of the truth.
>
> (Weil, 2002, p. 117)

The desire for a certain narrative – the self's narrative – is often the one on which a film has been pitched and commissioned. In wanting to achieve this, what we want to

[58] Gilbertson, J. (1977). October 4 entry. Arctic diary Grise Fiord I, 25.8.77 – 15.12.77. Item no.18 4/6/26. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.

see and tell, we miss the reading of a reality. Even where it is done in good will, this contortion of reality undermines the subject, the nuances and twists in the story, and the filmmaker's veracity in dealing with the 'hard and rough' (Weil, 2002, p. 53) of reality. This desire to jemmy someone or something into a narrative is something I explore further in the next chapter when I consider Davide Panagia's (2009) narratocracy.

How do you rid yourself of desire? Weil (2002) recognises the energy within desire (p. 23). In the chapters of *Gravity and Grace* (2002), her approach to what you do with your desire escalates. In 'Detachment', Weil (2002) cites the Buddhist approach of extinction of desire by detachment (p. 13). This is echoed in the poet Garcia Lorca words, 'stalking the image', quoted by Margaret Tait as a description of her approach (Neely, 2008, p. 219), where dispassionate but concentrated looking reveals the 'naked truth' of the subject (Weil, 1973, p. 113). In 'The desire without an object', she compels us 'to tear the energy from its object' (Weil, 2002, p. 22), that is, the object of desire. in 'Attention and will', she urges one to master them through grace then, 'destroy them by attrition' (p. 121). In 'Training', she is more vehement, urging us to 'compel ourselves by violence to act as though we had not a certain desire or aversion or desire' to advance 'the work of training the animal within us' (p. 124) (here she uses the example of a man who beats a dog to make it learn).[59]

The extinction of desire that Weil (2002) mentions in 'Detachment' is not found in all schools of buddhism. Desire is central to the philosophy and practice of the buddhism of Nichiren Daishonin, who wrote that 'Earthy desires are enlightenment'[60] (Writings of Nichiren Daishonin 1: 35, pp. 317–320). He urges his followers not to cut off or separate themselves from their desires, but to use desire to fuel your buddhist practice which in itself will reveal the wisdom, courage, and compassion of enlightenment, changing the

[59] These writings were written at different times which may reflect how her thinking is developed by her change in circumstances.

reality of how you think, feel, and thereon act. Within this debate, the crucial point is where or when to be desirous. In Nichiren Daishonin's (1999) buddhism, you are urged to express your desire when chanting in front of the gohonzon (the Sanskrit mandala) then let it go, so that it does not cloud or distract you in your daily business or interactions with others. It is a different approach to Weil, but its ambition is the same in that it aims for non-distraction. Within my Buddhist practice, I have been gripped by something I dearly wanted to happen: nothing happened until I could hold the desire (rather than it holding me), and, when something did happen, it was entirely different but better in so far as it suited everyone's, not just my, want. I have also, through poor mental health, felt no desire or interest to do anything. I missed the positive energy of desire and the focus it gives to help create and sustain thoughts, encounters, and work. The energy of desire as a means to both create then sustain attention is something I consider further in Chapter 6 when I examine Audre Lorde's (1984) writings about erotic power.

Michael Renov (1993) articulates the nature of this productive energy when he writes about 'documentary desire' (p. 5), the filmmakers desire to know and to express the full potential of her vision. With harnessing its two sides – a productive drive to realise something yet-to-be realised, or an unrestrained fixation – documentary desire can lead the filmmaker to self-indulgence, skirting through the world and squandering the opportunity to fully experience and respond to it. Returning to the quote 'The wrong way of seeing' by Weil (2002, p. 117) is to avoid grabbing at something that might deform the truth, she urges that we 'draw back before the object we are pursuing'. She warns 'By pulling at the bunch we make all the grapes fall to the ground' (2002, p. 117). Whilst I disagree with Weil's antithetical approach to desire, I agree with her advocation of self-control.

A note on will, which can be confused with desire: whilst desire can be the fuel, will is the capacity to follow through your desire. It is the mastering of the machine – our

bodies – that creates the action that effects the change. Weil (2002, p. 117) talks about how our mind directs our bodies to alter that which is outside of us:

> The will only controls a few movements of a few muscles, and these movements are associated with the idea of the change of position of nearby objects …

This physical analogy is useful, as we can know how the body feels when we want to make something happen. In reading this, I immediately remembered the day I put on my many layers (catching my neck on a zip, snapping a bootlace, then, when fully contained in eight layers, realising I needed the toilet) before setting out on an elaborate scheme to lure the ravens with food (they had become 'the bloody ravens' by then) into the frame of my camera for this excellent shot I had envisioned.

> What could be more stupid than to tighten up our muscles and set our jaws about virtue, or poetry, or the solution of a problem. Pride is a tightening up of this kind. There is a lack of grace (we can give the word its double meaning here) in the proud man.
>
> (Weil, 2002, p. 117)

The ravens stayed away. My whole physicality concentrated on the 'outward reward' (Weil, 2002, p. 117) of an encounter with the ravens. What can the filmmaker do to reign in such wilfulness? 'We have to try to cure our faults by attention and not by will' (Weil, 2002, p. 116).

Murdoch on delusion

While Weil stimulates debate about desire, Murdoch (1970/2001) homes in on delusion. According to Murdoch, the enemy of attention is 'the fat relentless ego' (p. 51). There is a

quote by Murdoch (1970/2001, p. 77) I have written out onto the cover of my Editing Notes book with the heading 'mediocre mind':

> One of its main pastimes is daydreaming. It is reluctant to face unpleasant realities. Its consciousness is not normally a transparent glass through which it views the world, but a cloud of more or less fantastic reverie designed to protect the psyche from pain. It constantly seeks consolation, either through imagined inflation of self or though fictions of a theological nature.

Reading this, it is as if Iris Murdoch's description of unrelenting everyday delusion getting in the way of attention was written about me and my efforts to protect myself from the pain of reality. The narrative arc of so many Western stories (and documentaries) means that there must be a 'consolation' of some sort at the end so that we discard the 'unpleasant realities' we have glimpsed. These happy endings (or perhaps resolutions?) protect our psyche from the subject's pain and reassure us that good will out (see chapter 6 for Dylan Robinson's (2020) examination of settler storytelling using Panagia's (2009) theory of narratocracy).

What to do with another's pain is the reason why, so often, we do not attend: it means looking at them and it straight on and acknowledging this pain, in all its complexity and difficulty to respond. Yet confronting it is the 'responsibility' Levinas (1985, p. 98) refers to. The editing out of 'hard and rough' (Weil, 2002, p. 53) realities from the other's – or our own – narrative, is the avoidance and or denial of a person's truth and that, according to Levinas (1969), is a 'violence' (p. 61). As discussed in Chapter 2, Gilbertson has been criticised for ignoring the 'hard and rough' fact of the forced migration of Inuit to the High Arctic (Neely, 2014a; Jamieson 2019; Larsson & Stenport, 2019). With truth being central to the documentary ethos, ignoring the 'hard and rough' results in the

filmmaker 'running away from its social meaning' (Brian Winston's (1988, p. 274) criticism of Griersonian documentary).

In Chapter 7, I closely examine Gilbertson's representation of the High Arctic Relocation and what of the 'hard and rough' she had knowledge of. Using the liberatory theories of attention I explore in these three chapters – 4 Attending, 5 Listening, and 6 Taking time – I develop a 'calling to account' that challenges my own tendencies, and indeed my fear of taking, to commit a violence of avoiding or denying the truth and how this fear has made me pay attention.

Attending within friendship

From the youthful 'falling in' with Phemie, Johnny and Tina Clark, and Johnny Gilbertson in Shetland in the 1930s[61] to the Napayoks and Larry Audlaluk (and a number of others who I have not examined), Gilbertson explicitly refers to those she spends time with and those she films (who are not always the same people) as friends. When I visited the Arctic, the Napayoks and Audlaluks all spoke of Gilbertson as being their friend. This, along with accounts of these relations in her diaries, letters and interviews, is evidence that there was genuine friendship between Gilbertson and those she filmed. A full study of Gilbertson's approach to friendship goes beyond the parameters of this thesis. However, a critique of Gilbertson's practice of attention requires an examination of the fact that, in attending to her friends, they had a usefulness, a utility, a purpose to her and the filmmaking project. I do this in Chapter 6.

Aristotle's (ca 335 B.C.E./2019) *Nichomachean Ethics* is a key text in the philosophy of friendship. Aristotle determines three species of friendship (VIII.2–5) and questions the relationship between love and self love, which is where he locates the problems around friendships of necessity (11bba30-32). In 'Questions on love and charity'

[61] BBC (1981, September 24). BBC Shetland Special: Jenny Gilbertson (S. Gibbs Interviewer), SM&A BBCRS/2/16/3. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

(from *Summa Theologiæ* (2000), originally written around 1270), St. Thomas Aquinas considers the appetitive nature of love (something I consider again in Chapter 5, when I contemplate the tendency to assimilate). 'Lecture on friendship' by Kant (1930) looks at love of the self in friendship whilst surveying what he believes are the three kinds of friendship: need, taste, and disposition. In 'You shall love your neighbour', Søren Kierkegaard (1846/1964) argues that friendship is poetic love, full of excess of emotion and love of the self, whereas love of neighbour is love of the other self, the 'other-you' (p. 66). Finally, *Friendship* by Elizabeth Telfer (1970) draws on Aristotle's definition but focuses on the how activity – reciprocated services, mutual contact, and joint pursuits – determines friendship.

In *Nicomachean Ethics* (*NE*), Aristotle (ca 335 B.C.E./2019) wrote about the five kinds of love[62] and the three kinds of friendship: of utility and of pleasure (*NE*, viii 3, 1056a 5-30); and of good between virtuous people (*NE*, viii 3, 1056b 5–35), where friends 'must have goodwill to each other, wish good things to each other' and, importantly, each friend must be aware of the other's good will and that this is reciprocated (*NE*, viii 3, 1056a 1–5) and acted upon (Rhetoric, 1381a 1). Weil (2005) agrees that an awareness of the sharing of goodwill is vital and that 'a certain reciprocity is essential in friendship' (p. 286). The notion of reciprocity is something I shall return to.

Aristotle's approach to friendship focuses on the self, seeing friendship as an expression and an extension of self-love (*NE*, IX.4 to 9): 'A friend is another self' (*NE*, 1170b 5). This is not the self-love of seeking fame, money, and power, but an appreciation of one's own good. During Gilbertson's stay in Grise Fiord, we see her take care of herself; when her housing situation causes her spirits to dip, she sleeps late and takes the day off; when faced with difficult situations, we see her protect herself by

[62] The five kinds of love are eros or passion; philia or friendly love; storge, the bonds of family or kinship; agape, divine or altruistic love; and philautia, self-love (*NE*, viii 6, 1065b 5-15).

showing dignity and self-respect; and when she wonders what the impact of others' behaviour might have on her, she considers carefully how to negotiate this with integrity.

Unlike Weil's (2005) notion of feelings of unworthiness, we do not see Gilbertson express any doubt in her capacity for friendship, or her like- or love-ability. Instead, we see her continuing to open up possibilities for new friendship, and sustaining them. bell hooks (2000), in her writings about love and the love ethic, emphasises love of the self as an important element but to be able to love yourself requires the loving of others. Whilst the word 'need' becomes somewhat contested in the following pages, that is what Gilbertson appears to need in her life: others. Both Aristotle (ca 335 B.C.E./2019) and Weil (2005) both assert that friendship comes from preference: from those who interest you who respond to your acts of goodwill, those who make you feel alive, those who take time with you. When in the Arctic, Gilbertson was a septuagenarian, a 'little old lady',[63] often called anannattiaq[64] (grandmother), yet Jackie Napayok and Larry Audlaluk, both in their mid-twenties, developed a real fondness for her. Whilst being an elder contributed to Gilbertson being a welcome guest, Napayok (2018) said she was fun and made him laugh.[65] Audlaluk, who already had an interest in film (his uncle Phillipoosie played the small boy in Robert Flaherty's *Nanook of the North* (2022), liked her because she was interesting and 'was up for anything'.[66]

From her first foray into documentary in 1931, to Grise Fiord in 1978, Gilbertson's actions of openness and her efforts to create and maintain friendships do not appear to be efforts to please or make herself less-than. Instead, they are those of someone at ease with herself and with creating a space for the other, allowing her to listen and take time with them. There is self-confidence, perhaps from her comfortable background and

[63] Gilbertson, J. (1970). Note on the back page, Arctic diary Coral Harbour 3, 30.6.1970 – 22.7.1970. Item no. 4/6/13. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[64] Gilbertson, J. (1970). July 22 entry, Arctic diary Coral Harbour 4, 1 22.7.70 - 15.10.70. Item no. 4/6/14. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[65] Interview with Jackie and Suzie Napayok, November 22, 2018. Thesis research by Shona Main.
[66] Interview with Larry Audlaluk, October 8, 2018. Thesis research by Shona Main.

education, yet she befriends those who do not share these. To both Aristotle (ca 335 B.C.E./2019) and Weil (2005), friendship requires equality: 'primarily in quantity, and secondarily in worth' (Aristotle, *NE*, viii 7 1158b 30-3567); 'there is equality because each wishes to preserve the faculty of free consent both in himself and the other' (Weil, 2005, p. 286). Equality is central to Gilbertson's relational approach, but requires further scrutiny as we look at the thing that runs parallel – or against – the functional aspect of her friendships with her friends: she was there to make films and needed people to help her.

Inuit attending

> When we attend to another, we discover value in our ability to forget self, to be realistic, to perceive justly. We use our imaginations not to escape the world but to join it, and this exhilarates us because of the distance between our ordinary dulled consciousnesses and an apprehension of the real.
>
> (Murdoch, 1970/2001, p. 88)

Gilbertson's diaries document the process of attention and the richness that it brings her. We see the building of friendship through time; when Tatiga and her make sealskin gloves together,[68] the recounting of polar bear stories,[69] and sharing family meals.[70] The time spent describing these encounters shows great care in watching and listening to

[67] Aristotle was in his early fifties when he wrote *Nicomachean Ethics* yet puts real friendship out of reach for not just the immoral but for 'sour people and older people' (NC, 1157b viii5 15). He asserts that they are indisposed to friendship because they are 'worst tempered and enjoy meeting people less, [and so lack] what seems to be most typical and most productive of friendship' (NC, 1158a viii 6 5). It would have been interesting for Aristotle to foresee, or better, meet Gilbertson who in was in into her seventies during her time in the Arctic and with an unending enthusiasm for creating friendships and the effort required to nurture and sustain them. She was an equal friend to anyone her equal.

[68] Gilbertson, J. (1977). October 8 entry, Arctic diary Grise Fiord I, 25.8.77 – 15.12.77. Item no.18 4/6/26. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.

[69] Gilbertson, J. (1977). October 1 entry, Arctic diary Grise Fiord I, 25.8.77 – 15.12.77. Item no.18 4/6/26. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.

[70] Gilbertson, J. (1977–78). December 16 entry, Arctic diary Grise Fiord II, 21.12.77 – 24.3.78. Item no.19 4/6/26. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.

every aspect of the exchange, some of which would not have been easy to learn of. Notably, Gilbertson does not centre herself – either in the encounter or its recollection – nor is she a passive observer: she listens more,[71] brings food,[72] or goes on to share an event.[73] There are also instances when it is clear that, not only is she attending, but she is also being attended to. Mark Freeman (2015) called this back-and-forth 'to behold, and to be beheld, by what is *other*' (p. 164, emphasis in original). This sharing of reciprocity is a sign of a bond but reciprocity from the other is not something you should ever expect (Levinas, 1985).

I would argue that her practice of attention happened within a culture that places great emphasis on it. As discussed in Chapter 3, Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit traditional knowledge recognises the importance of Inuuqatigiitsiarniq (showing respect and a caring attitude for others) and Avatittinnik kamatsiarniq (respect and care for the land, animals, and the environment) all require a commitment to attending to the living – human and non-human. Relationally, this is fostered through storytelling (Karetak et al., 2017), but also in an Inuk's relationship with their environment, where 'attentiveness is essential' (pp. 162–163). Nicole Gombay (2012) describes Inuit ways of attending, asserting the careful yet quiet amassing of information by Inuit about weather, wind, ice, and light, and about migratory patterns, populations/sightings, and animal/sea mammal behaviours. In attending to the world, Inuit are ethical, as they are prepared, flexible, and at ease with a lack of control. Ease with a lack of control is not a quality valued by the rationalist qallunaat who seek to regulate and regiment a world that runs by the Capitalist clock. There were challenges to Gilbertson's filming that created frustration. Skidoos broke down, snowstorms raged, people slept in, and ice took the whole day and night to

[71] Gilbertson, J. (1977–78). March 24 entry, Arctic diary Grise Fiord II, 21.12.77 – 24.3.78. Item no.19 4/6/26. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[72] Gilbertson, J. (1977). October 1 entry, Arctic diary Grise Fiord I, 25.8.77 – 15.12.77. Item no.18 4/6/26. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[73] Gilbertson, J. (1977–78). March 27 entry, Arctic diary Grise Fiord II, 21.12.77 – 24.3.78. Item no.19 4/6/26. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.

harden. Murdoch (1970/2001) asserts that attention is an ethical act that leads to ethical conduct: 'If I attend properly, I will have no choice and this is the ultimate condition to be aimed for' (p. 38). Gilbertson keeps a cool head when frustrated because, not only is she committed to keep things on good terms,[74, 75] but she also likes to keep possibilities open.

The importance of attending is also central to Inuit approach to art. Rasmussen (2018) in conversation with the Inuk writer and Artist Tommy Akulukjuk quotes the most celebrated Inuk artist Kenojuak Ashevak: 'Art is that which takes something real and makes it more real than before' (p. 60). This is Levinas' (1987) assertion, who argues that the function of art is reality, not expression. To grasp reality requires careful attending: 'What common perception trivializes and misses, an artwork apprehends in its irreducible essence' (p. 1).

Radical attention

One of the most radical aspects of attention is the recognition and respect for the particularities of difference. This resists the tendency to look for similarities and eschews complexity. Gilbertson and I are both guilty of this, declaring Inuit are just like Shetlanders.[76] While such comparisons that unify can have positive aspects (for example, the promotion of human rights), they can also unconsciously homogenise. In trying to make people and place more relatable, this tendency creates the conditions that compound historical yet uncorrected discrimination and prejudice, leading to further marginalisation, exclusion, and alienation. Murdoch (1970/2001, p. 64) observed this:

[74] Gilbertson, J. (1977-78). April 21 entry, Arctic diary Grise Fiord II, 21.12.77 – 24.3.78. Item no.19 4/6/26. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[75] Gilbertson, J. (1977-78). May 19-23 entry, Arctic diary Grise Fiord II, 21.12.77 – 24.3.78. Item no.19 4/6/26. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[76] Greer, S. (1987, October 4). The Inuit are still singing of filmmaker Jenny*, The Sunday Star,* p. 13. D64/1/56. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

> The more the separateness and differentness of other people is realised, and the fact seen that another man has needs and wishes as demanding as one's own, the harder it becomes to treat a person as a thing.

Indigenous communities are now resisting histories that reduce them to unnamed oddities. In Chapter 7, I discuss the principle behind Project Naming (Library and Archives Canada, 2005) where Inuit communities were encouraged to help identify the hundreds of thousands of unnamed, labelled with 'paternalistic, patronizing' descriptions (Lett, 2017, p. 82). It was only in her last two films (*Jenny's dog team journey* (1976) and *Jenny's Arctic diary* (1978)) that Gilbertson was the narrator. She was keen to name those she had filmed (using first names) which allows them an individuality and a particularity that was missing in her earlier films. However, when I showed some of the films she made in Coral Harbour to the community there, Jackie Napayok was wounded to hear the very English narrator refer to him as 'This man …'.

Julia Bell (2020), in her book, *Radical Attention*, considers the role that technology and social media has had on mind and bodies and on our ability to attend. Attention is necessary if we are to 'exist within conundrums, paradoxes, and to resist the temptation towards absolutes, to understand nuance' (p. 107). She outlines attention's radical potential, as 'an active form of hope' (p. 119) and calls on us to be 'Fully attentive, radically alive, aware of our physical vulnerability' (p. 121).

In contemplating my attention towards Gilbertson, I begun to understand what was truly radical about her. Written on a plaque, commemorating the place where Weil stayed briefly in New York, are the words 'Attention is the rarest and purest form of generosity'.[77] Gilbertson was aware that her filmmaking was of secondary importance to

[77] Also found in Pétrement, S. (1976). Letter from Simone Weil to Joë Bousquet. In: *Simone Weil: A life*. R. Rosenthal (Trans.) (p. 462). New York: Pantheon.

Inuit[78] She did not go in with a story board, other than an idea of the year and the things that had happened in it. Central to her was making friends and enjoying her life. Her capacity to attend was certainly assisted by this commitment to friendship, yet was also helped by the fact she was a self-funded, self-shooting, independent filmmaker, who only had to answer to those she filmed and herself. The 'just and loving gaze' (Murdoch, 1970/2001, p. 33) she turned towards Inuit reality was an act of generosity and hope.

Beyond looking

In exploring theories of attention, I have resisted a theoretical focus on looking because, whilst it plays a role, like Levinas (1969) I do not believe attention is about visual perception. In fact, visual perception or visual imperception can be a hindrance. I have a herniated cerebellum which has caused diplopia (double vision) and nystagmus (oscillating eyeball). This means my eyes do not work together and I lack peripheral vision. The duplicated image hovers to the left before sinking, while the foreground and the background swim (early in the day) or judder (as I get tired) in and out of focus. I am always asking myself which of the double is the real one? When I look into the middle-to-far distance at a light (perhaps at the moon or at the cinema), I tend to close my right eye (I believe the image I see with my left eye is the correct one). The pressure on my cerebellum has impacted my balance: I list to the right and cannot move my head, change direction, close my eyes, or suddenly look or listen without losing balance. Therefore, my own visual perception is unreliable, so I have had to move beyond it. While I do still take time to observe, when filming and focusing my camera, I have had to develop and trust the other aspects of attending: taking time to be with the other and listening.

[78] Greer, S. (1987, October 4). The Inuit are still singing of filmmaker Jenny, The Sunday Star, October 4, 1987, p. 13. D64/1/56. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

In 'Savoir' (from the book, *Veils*, co-written with Jacques Derrida, 2001) the philosopher, Hélène Cixous (2001), wrote of a nostalgia for her myopia that was cured by corrective surgery. Cixous' (2001) non-seeing was 'a veil in her eye … a veil in her soul' (p. 4). My own vision is doubled, shifting, ambiguous. However, I can identify with her feeling that it was her 'fault', that not seeing properly is a 'refusal' (are we refusing or being refused?) which results in us being 'part of a race who go about in confusion … in a position of avowal' (2001, p. 3). Cixous (2001) beautifully expresses her frustration and in how 'she was the first to accuse herself', the sense of wrongdoing that not seeing the way things should be seen. This continuing disbelief at her failure – 'I can't … I can't … I can't' (p. 3) – was further complicated by her belief that others do not believe that she cannot see. In having an invisible deficiency, nobody can see that you cannot see or that you see so differently. I know Cixous and I are not unusual: feelings of shame and evasion is common among those with impairments, conditions, and disabilities (Matthews & Harrington, 2000).

Post corrective surgery, Cixous (2001) has a retrospective appreciation of the time when 'seeing was a tottering believing. Everything was perhaps' (p. 109). When doubt was her constant companion, Cixous (2001) – in hindsight – suggests the potential of unsurety. Edna McCaffrey (2011) states that, to Cixous, 'non seeing was her seeing' (p. 354).

As I acknowledge in Chapter 7, I have a fear of not being able to be a filmmaker – or a very good filmmaker – because I cannot see properly. Cixous (2001) only appreciates the questioning of her looking after successful surgery causes her to cease to question. What if I could appreciate the ambiguity in my looking now? What if this place of double, shifting, and blurring images opens up a deeper enquiry into reality, and a heightened, creative attending and listening? Could appreciating my dubiety open up the political possibilities in the act of looking and listening? My love of a tripod, for balancing the

camera and myself, allows the stillness and steadiness that I crave, which in itself has helped me to attend to and allow that that is before me.

Cixous' (2001) reluctance to relinquish her non-seeing goes to the very the heart of her way of seeing knowledge as the questioning of the truth. Chloe Taylor (2006) challenges the rationalist Enlightenment standpoint and their 'irresponsible knowing' (n.p.), whereby if you can see you can know with certitude and authority. This relates back to Levinas' (1987) idea of the role of an artist, it is not to use 'common perception' which 'trivializes and misses' but to find the truth through attention (p. 1).

Levinas (1969) echoes Judaism's rejection of images (from the Second Commandment), arguing that vision is a violence, a harsh grab at reality that over-relies on the obvious, thereby reducing the other. Instead, he advocates 'a seeing without object identification, seeing through what is seen; or better, not seeing the seen so as to see the unseen' (Brand & Pinchevski, 2013, p. 108). He calls it 'an eye that listens' (Levinas, 1978, p. 30).

This more patient, sensitive and receptive approach allows the seer to enter 'states that those who see do not know' (Cixous, 2001, p. 13). McCaffrey (2011) calls this non-seeing 'a continuous seeing in thought' (p. 346): seeing as a thought process, a way of questioning, and indeed a refusal, but a refusal of our tendency to believe the apparent. These layers of subjectivity may run a coach and horses through Weil's (2002) void and Murdoch's (1970/2001) unselfing but attending does not rely on the eye. Levinas' (1978) suggestion that we need 'an eye that listens' (p. 31) chimes with Derrida's (2001) assertion that Cixous' corrective surgery on her myopia and the removal of doubt may have resulted in 'less sight, less hearing too' (p. 54). His suggestion is that we should 'shut our eyes in order to be better listeners' (Derrida, 1984, p. 29).

5 Listening

Introduction

> I get a great thrill when I record even one footstep in the crisp Arctic snow. It's a very special creak, creak, creak – utterly unlike any other sound in the world.
>
> Jenny Gilbertson, 1977[79]

Gilbertson's description of the sensuous experience of making and recording the sound of herself walking in the Arctic environment is a rare articulation of the reoccurring sensorial interest in the sonic influence of humans in the Arctic and her relationship with sound. Her diaries and interviews do not contain very much in the way of expressed feelings, or insights from listening, but are plentiful in their documentation of the *action* she took to listen and record. From these, and a close reading of her films and sound recordings, we can identify what she seems to have learned from listening and how this formed the way she represented Inuit life. This is considered here in relation to my own listening practices, which operate in a different context to Gilbertson's. This difference is both an awareness of the temporal – with 40 years of realisation, in Inuit and Colonial history, and cultural and political identity, and spatial – as a qallunaaq researcher and filmmaker entering, both conceptually and physically, Inuit territory.

There are a number of theoretical approaches which I could have used to examine sound in Gilbertson's work. These included a phenomenological approach (Descartes, 1984; Merleau-Ponty, 1964) or the use of sound as affect (Thompson, 2013; Massumi,

[79] Callaghan, E. (August 29, 1977). High adventure in the arctic: Jenny's a one-woman film team at 74. *Montreal Star*. D64/1/56. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

2002). Instead, I chose to focus on sound as practice, first exploring Pauline Oliveros' (2005, 2010) practice of deep listening as a way to fully attend to Gilbertson's, and indeed my own, Arctic sounds. However, the presence of Phillipoosie's singing on GF8[80] was a stark reminder that these recordings contain traditional knowledge and are of people's loved ones. These recordings are cultural artefacts and are therefore politically and ethically charged.

I began by examining the recordings using Pauline Oliveros' (2005) 'deep listening' technique, a practice of attention that reflects those of Weil (1973, 2002, 2005) and Murdoch (1970/2001). Aware of the temporal and spatial difference between the making of Gilbertson's recordings and my listening, I used Dylan Robinson's (2020) critical listening positionality to engage more critically and understand how my positionality influenced my listening tendencies. Then, with awareness, attention, and reflexivity, I focus on Robinson's (2020) assertion of the three tendencies of the settler – and, I argue, of a documentary filmmaker – to extract and assimilate (Klein, 2013; Coulthard & Betasamosake Simpson, 2016; Betasamosake Simpson, 2016; Derrida, 1984, 1993a, 1993b, 1998a, 1998b, 2003), and then succumb to the most comfortable narrative (Panagia, 2009).

The responsibility of qallunaat and their continued Colonisation of Inuit became an incapacitating critique. Facing up to it and making something from the shame of caused pains requires courage. Salomé Voegelin (2019) stirs the possibility of action and freedom. She argues that the incompleteness of sound creates a generative space, opening up opportunities for different ways of thinking and, crucially, doing. An admirer of DIY practice (where you just make with whatever you have), she sees taking action in response to sound as a way to create a new, different politics of the possible. The practices of listening, recording and presenting sounds allowed me to develop how I

[80] JGASR GF8. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

perceive, act, and explore an open yet richer dialogue about who we are and the world in which we live.

Gilbertson and sound: a background

Gilbertson began filming in 1931 when documentary was still very much in the silent era. On the cusp of the silent-to-sound era, Neely's (2018) 'Tantalising fragments' describes how, in her last major film of that period, *Rugged island* (1933), the promise of a distributor resulted in Gilbertson making a soundtrack. Today, two versions exist: her original silent version, and one with music and an added narration.[81] Evans (2012) reports how the narrative, told in the first film through title cards, is carried in the later version by voice-over. Returning to filming in 1967 (when sound recording cameras were available but were costly and oversized), she continued to film without synchronous sound, a male voice-over was provided by the broadcaster (until *Jenny's dog team journey* (1975) and *Jenny's Arctic diary* (1978), both of which she narrates herself).

Jenny's Arctic diary (1978) was filmed using a Bolex H16 camera (with a Pan Cinor 85 lens).[82] This had a wind-up mechanism, which meant it sometimes lost speed, but she did not have to worry about batteries losing their charge in low temperatures.[83] She recorded sound on a tape recorder (unknown make) that was then synced in or was laid over footage during the edit. This too was recorded at different speeds, although perhaps unintentionally.[84] The cost – and, in the Arctic, the scarcity – of film or reel-to-reel, required Gilbertson to make deliberate choices before pressing record. If it did not work out, Gilbertson lost the moment and the tape, or had to return to try to 'redo' the shot or recording. Furthermore, her recorder was temperamental, causing some of her sound to

[81] Both are held by the National Library of Scotland Moving Image Archive, although only the silent version is available online. Brown, J. (Director). (1933). *Rugged island* [Film]. Retrieved on December 13, 2022, from https://movingimage.nls.uk/film/0991
[82] Camera manuals. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[83] Gilbertson, J. (September 24, 1981). BBC Shetland Special: Jenny Gilbertson in conversation with Marjory Sinclair, BBCRS/2/16/3. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[84] See the handwritten notes on the back of the tape boxes. D64/1/2. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

have the recorder's temperament entombed within the recording, frustrating for Gilbertson with the filmmaker's desire for 'clean sound', but fascinating for us as it situates her practice within a time and a dynamic.[85]

As explained in Chapter 3, Gilbertson's Arctic sound recordings form the soundtrack to *Jenny's Arctic diary* (1978). They comprise people speaking, background noises, sounds of humans and non-humans, and mechanical and ambient sounds that provide the wild track to her films. Turning my attention to these, they offer evidence of her in situ listening to the settlement and its people, choosing the sounds she believed represented her experience of life in an Arctic settlement. The number and variety of sounds, recorded together with the regular references in her diary to the listening and recording of day-to-day sounds around the settlement, suggest she 'went out with the tape recorder' with great attention and enthusiasm.[86]

In her diary, Gilbertson lists the things she has recorded or wanted to record[87] to 'match' the footage she had filmed on an earlier occasion. Most of her sounds are slated (they have a recorded description at the beginning or end), sometimes with the date (if not, they can be matched to her diary entry), including a note, indicating to which film footage they relate. She took a great interest in technological or mechanical sounds, as supported by the detailed chronicling of the workings of the utility truck that delivered water to residents (GF6).[88] As my experience of Grise Fiord taught me, these are the sounds of absolute necessities of settlement life (which, as a pump in, pump out community – water, fuel, sewage – are so precarious and apparent compared to our own:

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[85] JGASR GF15. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[86] Gilbertson, J. (1977). October 3 entry. Arctic diary, Grise Fiord 1 25.8.77 – 25.11.77. Item no.18 4/6/26. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow. October 3, 1977.
[87] Gilbertson, J. (1977). September 12 entry. Arctic diary, Grise Fiord 1 25.8.77 – 25.11.77. Item no.18 4/6/26, NLSMIA. Kelvinhall, Glasgow. This corresponds to the sound recorded in the recording GF6.
[88] Gilbertson says, 'Grise Fiord September 1977. Water truck at Mike Vaydik's house. Taking the pipe in, starting the engine, indoors, the water filling and removing the pipe, out on the porch again, em er, the rolling up of the pipe, stopping the engine, rolling up the pipe and going away … End of 50ft of water truck at Mike Vaydik's house the last 3 of 4 bangs was him banging the nozzle.' JGASR GF6. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

we do not even think about the delivery or levels of these). They reveal the texture of reverberation in the human soundscape. For me, it was through the sounds of these various utility trucks going back and forth – now with 21st century Health and Safety alarms – and the constant drone of the generators that I comprehended what it takes to stay alive in the Arctic. These sounds reject the common portrayal of Inuit as primitive hunters on a silent 'barren wasteland' (Connolly, 1995). Gilbertson's use of sound reinforces her assertion that Inuit have harnessed qallunaat technology to make living in the Arctic easier and more comfortable.

Pauline Oliveros: deep listening

The pioneering composer and performer of electronic music, Pauline Oliveros (1932–2016), a lesbian (and for a large part of her career, like Gilbertson, an older woman) and her (then) decidedly uncool accordion, created a space in the male-dominated world of electronica and contemporary music performance. Radically challenging the teaching of musicianship by doing differently, she shifted the emphasis from tuning the ear to opening the ear – or rather, allowing an open ear to open your life. Her written works, specifically *Deep Listening* (2005), and *Sounding the margins* (2010), deliberate the method and effect of attention through listening and aim to help the reader develop the craft of listening and response (sounding).

'To listen is to give attention'

> I differentiate 'to hear' and 'to listen'. To hear is the physical means that enables perception (transformation of vibration into distinguishable sound). To listen is to give attention to what is perceived both acoustically and psychologically.
>
> Oliveros, 2005, p. xxii

Essential to being 'better listeners' is the difference between hearing and listening. Hearing is passive, involuntary: the physiological process where noises around us enter the ear and are transmitted to the brain but are not perceived at a conscious level (Oliveros, 2010, p. xxi). Listening is voluntary (Oliveros, 2010). When you identify a sound and start to listen, and home in on it, you are moving through the noise and breaking the 'indifference' of hearing (Lucia Dlugoszewski, quoted by Oliveros, 2005, p. xv). Listening has a psychological act, creating consciousness, the 'awareness, presence and memory … that can be retained and retrieved' (Oliveros, 2005, page xxi). You may not be able to fully remember what you heard, but, if you listened, something will be remembered.

Oliveros (2010) describes two modes of listening attentively. The first is focal, where you listen to one fixed point. Focal attention is 'like a lens, [that] produces clear detail limited to the object of attention' (p. 13). The second is the more 'open receptive state … of global attention', 'an open receptive state' 'to the field of undifferentiated fluctuating sounds' (2005, p. 248). This concentrated listening and the ability to shift between the two is deep listening, as taught by her handbook, *Deep Listening: A composer's sound practice* (2005, p. xiii), where she defines this as

> a practice that is intended to heighten and expand consciousness of sound in as many dimensions of awareness and attentional dynamics as humanly possible.

Attending to sound means 'processing' (Oliveros, 2010, p. 28) the sound by listening, allowing us to expand our understanding of the world and find meaning or direction so that we can take action (Oliveros, 2010).

A graduate of Oliveros' deep listening retreats, Mohamed Khaldi (2005) uses the *Encarta Dictionary* to think about attention. In contemplating attention as a definition for concentration, taking an interest, appropriate treatment, an affectionate act, and a

readiness to act, Khaldi (2005) identifies the ethical effect of attention: 'The summation of these properties creates respect. In our case it is respect for what our senses have heard, seen, tasted, smelled or touched' (p. 63). This recognition of the generating of respect resonates with Murdoch (1970/2001): 'right action and freedom, in the sense of humility, are the natural products of attention' (p. 69).

The eye and the ear

Oliveros' life work was about helping others to become better listeners. Her central argument was that that listening was 'locked up' due to the primacy of vision and, in education, the focus on reading and writing (2010, p. 30). She foregrounded listening yet was only too aware that 'The ear tells the eye where to look and the eye sometimes silences the ear' (Oliveros, 2010, p. 24).

The eye silencing the ear is something that self-shooting directors learn and relearn. When filming image and sound synchronously (and often while recording additional sound that is later synched in to bolster or enrich the audio track recorded by the camera), effort goes into composition, focus, tracking, etc. It is only when listening tentatively to playback, often with dread, that something will 'mess up' your sound, you become aware of sounds you had not heard consciously (Oliveros, 2010). 'Messed up' sound is sound that does not conform to the filmmaker's expectations or the visual.

Deep listening to Gilbertson's Arctic

This recording, by Gilbertson, is of a spelling lesson in Ivan Gallant's classroom, made in September 1977.[89] Elements of this recording were used in *Jenny's Arctic diary*, along with footage and a recording of Martha's syllabics (the Inuktitut alphabet) class (16:49 mins).[90]

[89] JGASR GF3. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[90] JGASR GF3. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

My first listening and transcription contained a record of Gilbertson's slate and of the clearly spoken dialogue in the recording. When I returned to this same recording to carry out a deep listening exercise, I noted that my first listening missed a lot of information that pertains to the dynamic of the relationship between the pupils and Ivan, the teacher. It is these obiter dictum comments that yield a much richer picture, the 'noise of the utterances' (Panagia, 2009, p. 45), within this exercise and the critical listening positionality exercise, based on Robinson's (2020) theory, that follows.

Deep listening is a two-part approach. It begins with focal listening, where you use an auditory 'lens'. This is similar to the kind of listening required for transcription. However, unfettered by the act of dictation, I heard new sounds, for example, that of a mechanical pencil sharpener, always a welcome distraction from work. I noted the process of replication (one child says the word, the others slowly whisper or breathe it in concentration whilst writing it down) and the movement from the recitation of English words, into Inuktitut, their mother tongue. And the presence of the other Colonial language, when Ivan, coming closer to the group, asked one child 'Asseyez vous', to please sit down in French. The child asked, 'What's that?' Later, another child says 'Tuavi!', or 'Hurry up!' in Inuktitut. The pupils offer short bursts of increased volume, nearly always accompanied by giggles, while Ivan maintains an almost monotonous care-worn tone ('Put it away and do it later', 'What's your problem?', 'Lizzie, you don't have to decorate it'). He seems to understand Inuktitut: a child makes a comment and they both laugh.

In my second deep listening, already supplemented with more information from the focal approach, I listened with 'an open receptive state' 'to the field of undifferentiated fluctuating sounds' (Oliveros, 2005, p. 248). Doing this, I became more aware of the organisation of the space: we hear the dimensions of a composite class. There are sounds that are some distance from the mic: chairs scraping and children

moving around in and out of mic range, whom Ivan is trying to get to sit down. Closer to the mic are the small group of children doing the spelling test. It is during this listening, to the moving fabric of resonance, that I heard the interplay between minor controlled deviancy (the pupils) and minor controlled frustration (Ivan's). I hear a teacher trying, but not too hard, to control pupils who both resist and capitulate, something as a teacher Gilbertson would have had experience of managing, or enduring. These two small exchanges pass without incident but, having been captured by tape, document a dynamic in the classroom.

The first is an exchange between a female pupil and Ivan.

8:09 Ivan:	What's your problem?
Child:	speaks in Inuktitut
Ivan:	What were you looking for … I could have told you …
Child (female):	She's afraid of you.
Ivan:	I know
Child (female):	You might kill her. (Giggle)
Ivan:	Are we ready?
Children:	Ii (Inuktitut for agreement)

This suggests that the child is aware of fear, be it fear towards a teacher, a qallunaaq, or anyone in power. However, there is a cheeky boldness in her comment: if she feels fear or is observing genuine or performed fear, she is not afraid to draw attention to the experience of it. It appears that Ivan recognises this ('I know'), but does not react.

The second exchange is between Ivan and the child who seems to have been reading most of the words for his group, which may suggest he assumed or was given a position of responsibility.

13.20: Ivan:	Cactus. Cactus. There is no cactus growing in the Arctic.
Child CTM (close to mic):	There is.
Ivan:	Is there?
Child:	Small ones.
Ivan:	Very small …
13.37 Child CTM:	Do you think Grise Fiord is poor. It's rich. (Sniff)
Ivan:	Agent. Agent.
Child CTM:	(speaks Inuktitut) No cactus, no flowers.
Ivan:	Agent. Lots of flowers.
Child CTM:	They said there aren't none
Ivan:	Who said?
Child CTM:	Me
Ivan: To wider class:	Has everyone finished the speller or are you just playing because I'm …[91]

The child's frustration is notable. Learning words from another world (cider, parlour, glider) or, a prescribed world (religious words such as pilgrim, omen, crusade), may make him feel his own world is considered irrelevant. Using the grasp of English that he has (Inuktitut would have been the language spoken at home), he resists what he feels is the limited view of qallunaat and defends his home. Richard Shaull (2005), in his preface to Paolo Freire's (1996) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, said 'There's no such thing as neutral education. Education either functions as an instrument to bring about conformity or freedom' (p. 16). This young Inuk, as a 'listening object' (Freire, 1996, p. 52), can hear the Canadian Government's educational objective of 'integration' happening in his

[91] JGASR GF3. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

classroom. This is exhilarating because we can hear his resistance to Western order and ordering.

Gilbertson transcribed this recording for her editing notes.[92] As a teacher, her sympathies may have been with Ivan. However, it is worth noting that she keeps recording and does not edit out the reality of the classroom. This is uncleaned sound. Khaldi (cited in Oliveros, 2005) asserted that deep listening 'creates respect' (p. 63). It is only with the thicker engagement of deep listening that I have become aware of their resistance within the classroom, a primary site of Colonialism (Rasmussen, 1999). Listening in to these young people, one of whom I would go on to befriend, as they defied, submitted and negotiated the realities of their assimilation, I felt a greater respect and the 'sense of humility' of which Murdoch (1970/2001, p. 69) speaks.

Dylan Robinson: critical listening positionality

Dylan Robinson (2020), a xwélmexw (Stó:lō First Nations), in his book, *Hungry Listening*, a resonant theory for Indigenous sound studies, primarily focuses on Indigenous participation in music and performance, yet succinctly details how we listen and the way in which our silent, thoughtless submission to the norms of Colonialism distorts what we hear. Here, I am applying his theories to sound recordings.

He references the settler's 'tin ear', a way to not have to listen.[93] The settler is defined as 'those who came to the United States and Canada with intention to stay and make new lives' (2020, p. 38), but, in terms of positionality, it is any non-Indigenous person who has benefited from Colonial policy. I consider myself a settler. As a grandchild of a Merchant seaman and fisherman who sailed in Arctic waters, three of whose children

[92] JGASR. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[93] The 'tin ear' refers to an important land hearing in Canada's courts (Delgamuukw v. British Columbia 1991 CanLII 2372 (BC SC) then on appeal [1997] 3 SCR 101) where Gitxsan and Wet'suwet'en people of what is now called Northwest British Columbia claimed title and thereon jurisdiction to 58,000km² of their ancestral land. The white judge refused to listen to a witness, Chief Mary Johnson sing her evidence, a limx oo'y or dirge song that formally documented the Gitxsan people's history of the land. The Judge employed the admission of 'a tin ear' as a means to reject the evidence.

emigrated to Toronto and California, and as a researcher and filmmaker who set foot on the Canadian Arctic, when writing about this experience and entering the archival collection that holds its sounds, I am a settler on Indigenous territory (Robinson, 2020).

Robinson (2020) details several other settler listening practices, one of which is the extractive habit of 'hungry listening'. This is based upon the xwélmexw (Stó:lō) expression for a settler, xwelítem or 'starving person' (2020, p. 2), as those who arrived on their land were hungry for sustenance and hungry for gold (2020, p. 48). Despite being Indigenous, Robinson (2020), schooled in the Canadian system, learned 'normalised and unmarked forms of settler colonial listening' (p. 3), such as the ordering of people's time through bells and alarms. Gombay (2012) explores this, quoting Simon Merkosak: 'You're always going round the clock, you [qallunaat] count your clock, you know, you go by the clock' (p. 30).

Robinson (2020) asks us to recognise how our positionality is manifest in the way we look, listen and sense – and then challenge it. When listening to recordings of the other, Robinson proposes a reflexivity – that we listen to ourselves listening – beyond Weil's (1973) idea of emptying oneself and Murdoch's (1970/2001) unselfing to attend. This is a movement into a more reflexive state, where we ask questions about who made the recording, who are we hearing, what or who are we not hearing, and who, as listeners, we are. This brings to mind Cixous' (2001) squinting, unsure of what she had seen, and McCaffrey's (2011) 'continuous seeing in thought' (p. 346). Robinson's (2020) critical listening positionality is a continuous listening in thought, which instigates a more historical and political engagement with the subject than Oliveros' (2010) 'processing' of sound (p. 28). When on Indigenous territory we need to unsettle ourselves through the act of listening (Robinson, 2020) by recognising and confronting the problematic tendencies of our Colonising 'hungry listening'. These are exemplars of extractivism, the

act of taking; assimilation, the act of making 'them' more like 'us'; and narratocracy, the stories we tell ourselves to make this palatable.

Extractivism

Martha Flaherty (1995) vividly outlined the feeling of many Inuit who experience researchers who come, take, then go away. This experience of appropriation is articulated in Inuit throat singer and experimental artist Tanya Tagaq and The Halluci Nation's song 'Collaboration not Appropriation' as a stand against qallunaat extractivism.[94] Robinson (2020) quotes Tagaq's experience of artistic collaboration in live performance where her voice is 'used as an ingredient in someone else's stew' (quoted from the *National Post* (March 8, 2017) in Robinson, 2020, p. 8).

In listening to sound, we listen 'for' something we are preparing to take (Robinson 2020, p. 48). Robinson (2020) draws on the conversation between the Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg (Missisauga Anishinaabe First Nations) writer, spoken-word artist and academic Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (Klein, 2013) and the writer and activist Naomi Klein (2013), on extractivism. In this, Betasamosake Simpson states that, 'Colonialism has always extracted the indigenous—extraction of indigenous knowledge, indigenous women, indigenous peoples'.[95] Later, Betasamosake Simpson (2017, pp. 201–202) developed this point:

> Extraction is a cornerstone of capitalism, colonialism, and settler colonialism. It's stealing. It's taking something, whether it's a process, an

[94] 'We're taking it back. Our water, our land, our blood, our women. We're taking it back, our men, our children, our hair, our language, our food, our blood … We know we're beautiful, That's why you want it. Stop taking, give it back'. Retrieved on November 13, 2021, from https://soundcloud.com/a-tribe-called-red/collaboration-appropriation

[95] Betasamosake Simpson, L. (March 6, 2013). Interview with Naomi Klein. *Yes* magazine. Accessed on February 26, 2019 on https://www.yesmagazine.org/social-justice/2013/03/06/dancing-the-world-into-being-a-conversation-with-idle-no-more-leanne-simpson

object, a gift, or a person, out of the relationships that give it meaning, and placing it in a nonrelational context for the purposes of accumulation.

Flaherty (1995) and Betasamosake Simpson (2016, 2017) both sound the alarm and set the scene in terms of my own engagement and recordings of people in Grise Fiord, and this contributed to the major ethical decisions I made during editing my film thesis, as discussed in Chapter 7. There is no suggestion or hint that these recordings were made other than consensually (Audlaluk uses the recorder himself), done in the open (i.e., they were not covert recordings) to be used to create atmosphere or background noise. Nonetheless, some recordings – particularly Phillipoosie singing, of baby Jeanie, of the classroom, and the local rock band Phreeze – contain people giving something of themselves to Gilbertson. Gilbertson 'took' all of these recordings, and they have rested amongst her artefacts ever since. The Shetland Archive is aware of the reparative work required to 'give back' these recordings and are seeking ways for them to be organised, categorised and described by the community and then made accessible to them and other Inuit communities connected to them. Until then, they remain an extraction from Inuit and are required to be regarded as such when considering their use.

For me, learning (present continuous) about Gilbertson, her work and some of the people in the recordings creates a loyalty. A loyalty that must be honoured. But to others, who have not made these connections, they will be listening to recordings found in the archives played back through the layers of time and different technologies. They will be of disembodied voices, from far away, ages ago, probably dead, nameless, just kids. When you are not face-to-face with the person making the sound, the sound is removed from any kind of living, breathing, blood-coursing relationship between you and the sound maker. It would be easy to take what you want, what fits your purposes. Robinson (2020), thinking about Levinas (1969), notes that, by listening to sound you are 'much less charged by an ethical precondition of responsibility … we do not feel the need to be

responsible to sound as we would another life' (Robinson, 2020, p. 15). It would have been interesting to hear Levinas apply his theory to such recordings. However, in my view, the sound of another life can move your directly into the ethical moment, more so if the recording is ethically (as in thoughtfully) framed, encouraging you to begin to understand what you are actually hearing.

Assimilation

Robinson's (2020) second tendency to recognise and resist the tendency to assimilate, 'the hunger to consume alterity' (p. 72). He acknowledges that Betasamosake Simpson (2013) is absolutely clear about the relationship: 'Extraction and assimilation go together. Colonialism and Capitalism are based on extracting and assimilating' (Klein, 2013, n.p.). Derrida, too, saw the way they work together: extraction is taking the thing, and assimilation is making it mine/like me. In his writing about friendship and hospitality (2000), he examines our tendency to consume the other, 'eating' everything that is external and foreign, and transforming it into something internal to us, our own (p. 99).

Derek Rasmussen (1999), in his master's dissertation,[96] describes how assimilation operated in policy and practice in Indigenous Canada and how education's liberal credentials of liberation and equality were used to adapt Inuit into the 'white way of life' (p. iii), itself in service to Capitalism and Colonialism. He describes how the Canadian Government, aided by the churches, sought to 'educate them out of primitive childhood' taking Inuit, First Nations, and Metis hundreds of miles away from their families, their culture, and their lands to residential schools. Here they were separated from their siblings, stopped from speaking their own language or communicating with their parents, starved, neglected, sexually, physically and emotionally abused, and ordered into forced

[96] *'The Queen wishes her red children to learn the cunning of the white man': The myth of educating Inuit out of 'primitive childhood' and into economic adulthood.*

labour.[97] There are alternative ways of exterminating the other but this – 'genocide by attrition' (Rosenberg, 2012, p. 16) – achieves the same goal.

Whether and when Indigenous children returned home, not only were they deeply traumatised, but they also could not speak or relate to their parents, culture, and land: they did not have the words, the mentality, or the knowledge of Inuit survival. Rasmussen states all of this in his thesis in 1999, it was confirmed by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 2015, and reflects a number of Inuit writers' personal accounts, such as those of Sheila Watt Cloutier (2015), Christy Jordan-Fenton and Margaret Pokiak-Fenton (2010), Zebedee Nungak (1990, 2017) and Larry Audlaluk (2020). In the 1970s, the Canadian Government sought to 'accommodate' the Indigenous population: they formalised the teaching of a limited amount of Inuktitut in settlement classrooms but, by doing so, jemmied it into the capitalist model to manipulate supply and demand (Rasmussen, 1999, p. 77).

Glen Coultard (2014), writing on Indigenous politics and self-determination, notes how Canada prides itself for moving its Indigenous people 'from wards of state to subjects of recognition' (p 18). It was only in 1982 that Canada legally recognised and enshrined (it did not create them – they existed before) the idea of Aboriginal rights in section 32 of the Constitution Act. They were not defined: this was left to treaties and the Supreme Court, in response to legal actions. These have since confirmed rights to land, the right to benefit from the development of Indigenous territories and resources, and the right to self-government. Thomas Suluk, the Inuk Member of the Northwest Territories Legislature in 1985 (before the creation of Nunavut), quoted by Rasmussen (1999, p. 82), expresses what 'recognition' feels like.

[97] Government of Canada (2015). *Honouring the truth, reconciling for the future: Summary of the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*. Retrieved on November 12, 2022, from https://ehprnh2mwo3.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Executive_Summary_English_Web.pdf

> Look at me, I'm standing here in a three-piece suit talking an alien language … I have been forced to adopt the ways of the dominant society in every sense of the word. I battled my fellow Inuit for the right to speak for them and in doing so I alienated many of them. I have become irrevocably involved and assimilated into a much larger battle. The greatest effect of aboriginal rights will paradoxically be the assimilation of Inuit as a distinct people. This realisation will force me to draw inward as the only means of survival ... I am trying to give a warning signal, that we are just sick and tired of having to adopt a second face. It's like trying to live in two different cultures at the same time. Why should we always have to do it your way?

Suluk's words are distressing, more so when considered alongside Levinas' (1969) assertion that the other is infinite (p. 66). This means that the absolute exteriority of Inuit – and all Indigenous people – cannot be contained, assimilated or incorporated into a totality. Colonisation has failed to assimilate and incorporate Inuit into 'the white way of life' (Rasmussen, 1999, p. iii). As Betasamosake Simpson (2016) says, this failure is just one of the "miseries' that constitute Indigenous peoples' experience of our settler colonial present' (p. 249). As a settler, the possibility that I will try to integrate Inuit into my idea of them disturbs me. As a fellow woman filmmaker, the possibility that I will try to integrate Gilbertson into my idea of her is just as upsetting.

Narratocracy

Robinson (2020) reflects on Panagia's (2009) word 'narratocracy' as 'a storyline … a trajectory … a stenographic mark … an outliner … that incises itself onto the field of vision and begins a work of conviction' (p. 12). Or, rather, of reconviction, as all these stories work together, organising experiences and stories with an anticipatable and therefore

readable narrative arc, told in an anticipatable and therefore readable way. Robinson (2020) asserts that the narratocracy identifies the normative patterns of settler listening and sounding to make something 'palatable' with an uplifting arc from 'trauma to healing' (p. 48). So, not only does the settler extract the 'Native's' story, they then morph it into one that suits settler appetites, using words, sounds, and images that swaddle settler shame and show that, 'Look! We are *decolonisers*'. Even our well-intentioned 'accounts' of *their* stories set to lay bare the harm that has been done can entrap them further in harm: Roxane Krystali (2021) warns that, in looking at people as 'victims', our choice of narrative and their silences contributes and perpetuates to how their 'victimhood' is conceived and interrogated (p. 127).

Levinas (1969) calls reduction of the other a violence. In the telling of the story, Derrida (2003) calls it the 'worst violence' (p. 99), because it contributes to the complete appropriation or extermination of all others into oneself as a violence that keeps repeating. What might this violence look like? Thinking about the editing process, it might begin with editing out a look to camera or a few words at the end of their dialogue that upends or questions the account they have just given, or that the filmmaker sought; the inability to have threads dangling or images or sounds unexplained ('we'll just tidy that up'); or the use of music or effect to glide over something you never really got to grips with. These all result in the filmmaker silencing their subject. Derrida's (2003) reference towards the repeating nature of the 'worst violence' is a metaphoric way of describing the ongoing impact of exclusion. This is why Derrida (1998b) in *Of Grammatology* urges deconstruction, which is not an analysis or a technique, but a process of the text never being resolved (1993b). Deconstruction resists violence by interrupting the text and making possible 'the least violence' (Derrida, 1998b, p. 65). To Derrida, when speaking of the other, there will always be violence, but you can choose the least possible violence: if

he were speaking to me, he is telling me to stop Colonising them, do not Colonise them in your film.

When a sound supports a visual (for example, the trope of Indigeneity), it helps the audience to appropriate the 'correct' understanding of what the filmmaker is presenting. Yet sound can disrupt the narrative. In Rosalind Nashashibi's (2000) *The state of things*, an Egyptian love song is played during a Glasgow jumble sale. This could have been edited in afterwards, but Nashashibi introduced it *in locus*, unsettling both the subjects and the audience. Sound can also be used to decontextualise the image. The use of black screen for sound and silent visuals in Trinh T. Minh-ha's (1982) anti-ethnography, *Reassemblage*, dislocates the audience's expectations, making the audience think and feel through what they see and/or hear.

I would suspect that most filmmakers start out with the best intentions. Alan R. Marcus (2006) does not believe that Robert Flaherty set out to assimilate or destroy Inuit when he filmed *Nanook of the North.* Instead, he wanted to depict them as the 'resourceful, inventive and innately likeable' (p. 209) people he believed them to be, using the motif of the family to bridge the culture gap. However, the historicising, by making them play a role (Levinas, 1969) – making them use spears when hunting the walrus when they in fact used rifles, and the scene where Nanook bites into a record – made Inuit look out of place in modern times, perpetuating the myth of them as primitive people, situated in a historical context, i.e., the past. Moreover, pushing the idea of the 'happy-go-lucky Eskimo' (Marcus, 2006, p. 209) who, forever smiling, takes the violence. Flaherty, in wishing to give his work a defined narrative, sought the dramatic, the romantic and poetic: all the things he himself aspired to. In doing so, he created a trope that has entombed Inuit visually and politically.

Gilbertson and stereotypes

Gilbertson's nine years of living in the Arctic gave her a knowledge, understanding and great empathy for Inuit, apparent in her films and interviews. Her reputation was as an advocate for Inuit: in 1987 a Canadian newspaper carried the headline 'The Inuit are still singing of filmmaker Jenny'[98] while writing her obituary Forsyth Hardy called her a 'faithful and conscientious an interpreter of their life'.[99] Yet, the voiceover to *Jenny's Arctic diary* (1978) contains the reproduction of a number of Colonial tropes.

'the decadent effect of living on social welfare'

After a sequence on the importance of seal hunting, Gilbertson notes the 'the decadent effect of living on social welfare' (3:20). Gilbertson's comment expresses a socially conservative view but could also been seen to promote the view that Colonised people have a 'mentality of dependence' that turns them into 'loitering bums' (Marcus, 1995, p. 214). Alatas (1977/2006) goes further suggesting that the image of the indolent native reflects 'a major justification for territorial conquest' (p. 215). The cultural and moral decline of Inuit was one of the government's motivations for their Relocation (Marcus, 1995).

'pagan beliefs with their cruel taboos'

In the Colonisation of Canada, the churches sought to Colonise the soul of Indigenous people. Anglican educator Thomas Arnold (1816/2016) suggests that Colonisation was a moral mission: 'the glory and happiness of diffusing the light of the Gospel amongst poor and blinded Pagans' (p. 29). Gilbertson's comments suggest that Christianity was a civilising force (7:11), highlighting how important the Church was, and still is, for Inuit: Grise Fiord is too remote and small for a qallunaaq minister, so they have their own lay

[98] Greer, S. (October 4, 1987). The Inuit are still singing of filmmaker Jenny. D64/1/56. *The Sunday Star.* The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[99] Hardy, R. (January 1990). Appreciations Jenny Gilbertson: filmmaker. *The Scotsman.* D64/1/56. The Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick.

preachers. However, years after Gilbertson visited, the Anglican and Catholic Church were exposed as agents of genocide of First Nations, Metis and Inuit (Chrisjohn, Young, & Marauan, 1997).

'unpleasant psychological problems'

Filming locals watching the sun reappear in February, Gilbertson states: 'the dark days, when unpleasant psychological problems could boil to the surface, are over' (28:44). This comment is given no further explanation. There has been much written about Arctic madness - *pibloktoq* – or the myth of it (De Leeuw et al., 2010; Dick, 1995) however she may have been referring to an awareness of mental health issues in the community. Similar to the UK, this was rarely discussed in the 1970s. However, it is now widely acknowledged and that key contributory factors 'are direct results of Colonialism as well as socio-political and economical marginalisation and oppression' (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999, p. 34). It has now become a significant priority for the Nunavut Legislative Assembly.

During the time in which Gilbertson operated, there was no real culture of scrutiny, critique or challenge towards Colonising nations such as Canada. The prevailing attitude at that time was that Colonisation in the Arctic had been a great success (Marcus, 1995). Forty years on, inquiries into, for example, Residential schools, the Sixties Scoop (Stevenson, 2020), Relocation and disagreement around the use of Indigenous territory, has led to Canada's politics of Colonisation becoming deeply contentious. For a filmmaker now, the prevailing culture and the knowledge of audiences has changed. Social media means a film can travel fast and far: audiences are more aware of histories and events meaning anyone who distributes work is considerably more accountable and open to challenge. See Inuk filmmaker Alethea Arnaquq-Baril and Jody Wolfe (2019) on qallunaaq Dominic Gagnon's bricolage of found Inuit footage, *Of the North* (2016).

That Gilbertson, an active advocate and, perhaps to some, an 'authority' on Inuit, repeated such damaging, normalising stereotypes, is disturbing, particularly since they

were embedded within otherwise challenging representation. It operates as a warning to me. Growing up in a racist, Colonising country I am aware this has left 'an infinity of traces' (Gramsci, 1999, p. 628) that lie deep within me. My intention, like Gilbertson is sincere. However, my fear of not knowing or making mistakes about Inuit causes anxiety. I can only respond to by reading more, paying greater attention and taking greater care.

'Listening otherwise' to resist

Robinson (2020), exploring listening for redress, asks us to 'listen otherwise' (p. 73), particularly to the silences. His consideration of Martin Daughtry's (2013) acoustic palimpsests, an approach to listening – akin to Derrida's (1994) hauntology in *Spectres of Marx* – reveals layers and ghosts of the historical, political, social, cultural, and indeed psychological past: 'the things the recording encourages us to remember and the things it urges us to forget' (Robinson, 2020, p. 60).

These silences directly relate to Robinson's (2020) warnings about narratocracy. In filmmaking there is a strong urge to be conclusive. This shows purpose, clear thinking, and helps push home an argument. Sometimes we have sonic – and visual – holes in our ideas made manifest by gaps in our editing timeline, so we fill the gap, maybe with things that help our story along, perhaps some music. It is a tidy was of presenting the story. Recognising the potential of what it in these 'spaces in-between words', Cauleen Smith (2020), the African American interdisciplinary artist examines 'the everyday possibilities of the imagination' (p. 545). Martin Luther King Jr. (1967) called for people to step out of the ordinary 'well-adjusted' way of coping and surviving this unjust world. He advocated that we must become creatively 'mal-adjusted' so as to stand against racism, social and economic injustice, militarism and violence.[100] Smith (2020, p. 247) responded with 'The Association for the Advancement of Cinematic Creative Maladjustment: A Manifesto'.

[100] 'I am sure that we all recognize that there are some things in our society, some things in our world, to which we should never be adjusted. There are some things concerning which we must always be maladjusted if we are to be people of good will … racial discrimination and racial segregation … religious bigotry …

2. The Maladjusteds liberate image from narrative. The Maladjusteds know that the spaces in-between words are where the image lives. The arsenal and the pantry of the filmmaker are sited at the in-between space
3. Narrative is the oppressor of the Moving-Image…. The Moving-Image can and must do more than slave for narrative. The Moving-Image must rise up and reclaim the power it has for so long surrendered to story. The true power of the Moving-Image is its resistance to plot. Images resist.

Smith's call to resist the tyranny of narrative and lose the plot is a rejection of narratocracy.

Critical listening positionality within Gilbertson's Arctic

Through the lens of extractivism, I was aware that, every time these recordings are heard, the hearer takes once more. Listening to this recording in the 21st century, I could hear the sound of Colonisation, and the everyday good-natured work of assimilation. And I could hear the pupil's defiance. It is impossible for me to know what Gilbertson's thoughts were when recording this. However, an interview with CBC in 1974,[101] during her time in Coral Harbour, reveals some resistance to assimilation:

> the white man has brought his … his way of life there … they tried to put … south form of schooling on the children, the children were reading, starting

economic conditions that take necessities from the many to give luxuries to the few … the madness of militarism, and the self-defeating effects of physical violence.' M. L. King, Jr. 1967, p. 185.

[101] Gilbertson, J. (January 16, 1974). Transcript from interview, *This land* (L. Jennings, Interviewer), CBC Archive, Ottawa. Thesis research by Shona Main.

> with the Dick and Jane reader, reading about things that didn't mean one thing to them.

She goes on to recognise the importance for Inuit children to be able to speak the language of their interpersonal world:

> it's bad enough coming to be closed up in school. Not to be able to express yourself or for your teacher to understand a problem you have or your unhappiness is a bad thing.

Gilbertson does go on to recognise the changes that Rasmussen noted:

> But the whole Education Department towards the North has changed completely and quite quickly, and there are a great many Eskimo readers, not actually in Eskimo but about Eskimo children, about hunting, about their own people. [102]

It is unclear whether this was said in support of Inuit involvement in the education system or in narratocratic praise of the Canadian education system. Gilbertson, ever polite and encouraging, may well have been doing both. The interviews she did in the 1970s for CBC, explored in the film thesis, reveal a gracious reminder that Canadians are on Inuit land, and that Inuit are perfectly capable of looking after it and themselves.[103] Unfortunately, interviewers are less interested in her experience of living and filming with Inuit than they are with her age: stories about old women filmmakers also had to be

[102] Gilbertson, J. (January 16, 1974). Transcript from interview, *This land* (L. Jennings, Interviewer), CBC Archive, Ottawa. Thesis research by Shona Main.
[103] Gilbertson, J. (January 16, 1974). Transcript from interview, *This land* (L. Jennings, Interviewer), CBC Archive, Ottawa. Thesis research by Shona Main.

anticipatable and therefore readable. Nonetheless, she clearly says something very different about Inuit.

In relation to eschewing the narratocracy, Robinson's (2020) asks us to 'listen otherwise' (p. 73) and considered then with now. The dominance of the English and French language expresses the Colonial mentality that has had a devastating effect on Inuit and Inuktitut. Canada's 2016 Census (Statistics Canada, 2017) showed that 51.4% of Nunavut's population is under age 25, confirming the dominance of youth culture and attitudes. Across the entire Inuit population, 64% could hold a conversation in Inuktitut, yet only 55.8% of children aged 0–14 and 57% of 15 to 24-year-olds speak it as a mother tongue: all the others are learning their own language as a second language. The increasing dominance of the English language in the everyday (Moore, 2019; Statistics Canada, 2017), and the rear-guard action by the Quebecois to increase French in Inuit schools (Nunavik in French Quebec and Nunavut), was criticised in evidence given to the 2019 United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (United Nations, 2019), where it was stated that Canadian Government agencies invest 39% more on French language services in Inuit territories than on Inuktitut services.

Leroy Little Bear (2000), the founding member of the University of Lethbridge's Native American Studies Department, states that it is from language that Indigenous people conceive the world and themselves. It is 'Through learning and speaking a particular language, [that] an individual absorbs the collective thought processes of a people' (p. 78). This makes the classroom recording a significant historical document. It shows the good-natured, everyday assimilation of Inuit being robbed of their culture, identity, and tools to conceive and live in their very particular world.

Beyond extraction, assimilation and narratocracy

The longer I have spent on Inuit territory, the more I have learned that, as a daughter of the Colonial power, I am complicit with the brutal, violent, and shameful – and ongoing –

Colonisation of Inuit. As someone learning and making within these truths, what am I taking from the people of Grise Fiord, people who have already endure the 'miseries' of extraction (Betasamosake Simpson, 2016, p. 249). Furthermore, as the friendly, amenable everyday violence of assimilation in the classroom recording shows, assimilation can be committed with 'kindness'.

Everyone who is not the self is an other, as is Jenny Gilbertson, the true subject of my research and film. I could too easily mine her and her work for my own purposes, incorporate this into my idea of her and women filmmakers, and then tell a tidy tale. How do I do 'the least violence' (Derrida, 1998b, p. 65)?

'Listening out' for new possibilities: Salomé Voegelin

> a possible reality, mobile and unseen … sounds the minor, the suppressed, the hidden and the ignored people, communities …This is not invention this is listening to the fragments of reality, a listening out for the less heard.
>
> (Voegelin, 2019, p. 38)

For a long time I watched *Jenny's Arctic diary* and listened to Gilbertsons' Arctic recordings, with their ghosts, the voices missing and the context and history we now know, and felt unsure, in fact fear, about how to respond. I have to thank Salomé Voegelin (2019) for helping me to chart a way out of this anxiety. To her, sound opens up the possibility of a new, a better world. Sound 'illuminates the limits of the norm, the how possible, and the effects a different resonance that can grasp and communicate the possibility if the impossible' (p. 38). Voegelin (2019) attributes this to sound's procreative effect.

When we look at a picture, we do not instinctively imagine the sounds that are within it. Perhaps it is because we are easily satisfied when visual information is presented to us. But, when we listen to sound or a voice without a visual, we become

open to what might be. We begin to see it – inside our head, the forms, the colours, the movement of light – and we think about who is talking, what they are thinking, and how they are feeling when they say something, where they learned that way of phrasing ('no cactus, no flowers' in GF3).[104] Sound activates imagination. It creates a freedom that activates possibilities. What is possible is down to the power of our imagination. This imaginative flurry may only last as long as our imagination is unfettered, but this opening to the realms of possibility is the generative pre-action that Voegelin (2019) speaks of. Moreover, imagination is essential to those who push beyond the rational and limited and seek better or different truths: 'the listening responsibility for the imagination of reality' (p. 38). However, Panagia (2009) asserts that, while our imagination can interrupt the prevailing regime of perception, the experience of sensation 'disarticulates' it: he uses the examples of utterances outside the edicola (newsstand) in a piazza (pp. 45–73); the work of Caravaggio and Francis Bacon, which you can experience without having to 'read' or fully understand it (pp. 96–122); and the mouth, the tongue, our teeth and our tastebuds as a site of political reflection of the self, others, and the world (pp. 123–148). I might add a utility truck's 'health and safety' sound in an otherwise unpeopled environment.

It has been argued that Gilbertson eschewed the political (Neely, 2014a; Jamieson, 2019; Brownrigg, 2016). The political, to Voegelin (2019), rejects 'the antis and a politics that can only imagine itself in terms of antagonism and opposites' (p. 18). To Voegelin (2019), politics is doing differently. In taking an interest in the noises of the generators and the trucks and the building and maintenance of Inuit settlement life, Gilbertson was doing differently. Those days and nights over many years listening to Inuit friends and acquaintances speak about their lives formed her clear articulation that Inuit were 'perfectly able to manage their own affairs … It's their land'.[105] Gilbertson's Arctic

[104] JGASR GF3. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[105] Gilbertson, J. (January 16, 1974). Transcript from interview, *This land* (L. Jennings, Interviewer), CBC Archive, Ottawa. Thesis research by Shona Main.

films chart this solidification of her belief: they are the generative actions she took. For me, it was a very cold Wednesday morning in October that the political possibility of sound began lead to action. In listening the sound of an Inuk child reading and learning to spell Christian words, moving back and forth between English, French, and Inuktitut, and uttering resistance, it stimulated a reimagining in me: 'how else' can I recognise and respect those who experienced it? How can I resist assimilating Inuit and Gilbertson?

Sound(ing) the ethics of DIY

Murdoch (1970/2001) states that attention is an ethical act that leads to ethical conduct: 'If I attend properly, I will have no choice and this is the ultimate condition to be aimed for' (p. 38). Voegelin's (2019) possibility comes after the act of attending when she explores the sound-stimulated imagination and notes how it creates an ethical way of working. To her, ethics is not rule-based, or indeed anything that requires compliance or a moral kind of fuel for making good decisions. Instead, it is 'the engine of the action itself' (p. 103).

Voegelin (2019) associates the ethic of attention – the looking closely, reading carefully, listening critically, the organising, the doing, the making (p. 104) – with 'listening out' for the unheard, being open to the unexpected, imagining the possibility of now. To her, this is the basis for a self-reliant DIY approach to production: by questioning the prevailing norms and values of the industry, with 'an avoidance of professional processes' and an employment of 'inexpert, contingent and improvised ways of doing things' and which in effect 'disrupts status quo' (2019, p. 3).

From the very beginning, in Shetland in 1931 and then again in her second filmmaking career in the Canadian Arctic in the 1970s, Gilbertson's 'single woman film team'[106] completely epitomised her DIY filmmaking ethos, now an area of growing

[106] Callaghan, E. (August 29, 1977). High adventure in the arctic: Jenny's a one-woman film team at 74. *Montreal Star*. D64/1/56. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

interest in feminist cultural activism (Downes, Breeze, & Griffin, 2013). As stated in Chapter 1, she taught herself; she bought, operated, and lugged her own basic kit; worked largely without a commission; moved to places where the people interested her, filmed and recorded herself, edited the films herself (until no longer able to do this), then, if there were no takers, distributed them herself. In the Arctic, her subsistence and filming were funded by her modest Zetland Council teacher's pension. However, they were significantly assisted by the fact she had no pressurised shooting schedule or commission constraints. Lots of time, the incorporeal goodwill generated through friendship, and, as Voegelin (2019) notes, the resource of a commitment to those she filmed were her resources. Gilbertson just did it. And took all the help that was offered. Voegelin (2019) flicks her hand about 'a right way to use technology' (p. 4). Gilbertson spoke about her lack of technical knowledge and her recordings lay bare how she struggled with it,[107] a struggle that then involves Larry Audlaluk fixing it.[108] These are the uncomfortable but achingly true realities of the relationship we have with our equipment, ourselves, and, when things go wrong, our relationship with those we film and record.

Voegelin (2019) notes what happens to the women practitioner who is 'not welcomed by or willing to work in the male dominated environments … [they] invent a different space and a different way' (p. 3). Voegelin (2019) sees DIY not just as rejection of the dominant more of production but the possibility to 'make a whole other plane of influence' (p. 6). Gilbertson never articulated rebuff or refusal in her diaries or interviews, but her quiet continuation, despite lack of funds, lack of broadcast opportunities, and age, can be read as a refusal. She was not going to be hindered by an industry that did not

[107] Gilbertson, J. (September 24, 1981). BBC Shetland Special: Jenny Gilbertson (S. Gibbs, Interviewer), BBCRS/2/16/3. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[108] JGASR GF15. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

care about her or her those she filmed[109,110] or a society where older people – older women – should 'relax by a fire or retire by a nice picket fence and a cottage'.[111] She just did it herself, using what was available to her and with the help of friends. Incidentally, this is how Alan O'Conner (2016) defines punk.

Gilbertson's non-conventional ideas of production and product is aligned with her relationship with her audience. She was confident that, if she found people interesting, others would, too,[112] something her granddaughter Heather Tulloch touched on.[113] She was fascinated by Iga and Kiguktak, who had washed a polar bear skin in their washing machine before dragging it through the snow tied to their skidoo to make it really white (*Jenny's Arctic diary* (1978) (13.52mins)). She greatly enjoyed the disco in Grise Fiord and the fact that the local rock band Phreeze (27:38mins) learned to play their instruments by listening to tapes. Gilbertson wanted to show the reality, that sometimes the hunt was unproductive and there was a lot of undramatic waiting around. After Grise Fiord, when editing the films made for the Museum of Man, her business partner, Peter Cock, would harshly question her judgement and competency with regards to understanding audience wants.[114] However, her quiet desire to undermine what some people may expect showed an understanding of 'the fact that all viewing occurs within a regime of perception' (Panagia, 2009, p. 14). Gilbertson clearly valued her appreciation of the detail of ordinary Inuit lives and knew others, if they could see it, would, too. As Cauleen Smith (2020)

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[109] Gilbertson, J. (April 15, 1982). Letter to Anthony Isaacs. BBC Executive Producer at the Travel and Exploration Unit. D64/1/32. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[110] Gilbertson, J. (August 21, 1982). Letter to Alastair Milne, BBC Director General. D64/1/32. Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[111] Gilbertson, J. (1977). Transcript from interview, *Take 30.* (P. Scholes, Interviewer). CBC Archive, Ottawa. Thesis research by Shona Main.
[112] Gilbertson, J. (1981, September 24). BBC Shetland Special: Jenny Gilbertson (S. Gibbs, Interviewer), BBCRS/2/16/3. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[113] Interview with Heather Tulloch. (2018, December 8). Thesis research by Shona Main.
[114] Cock complains about the 'fruitless search' and 'lack of action' in her polar bear film: 'You say you are not competing with National Geographic, well actually you are. People here become used to the quality they see on TV and so expect the same from everywhere.' Letter from Peter Cock, Ottawa to Jenny Gilbertson, Exnaboe, April 19, 1989. D64/1/39. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

said, 'The Maladjusted Spectator does not expect to be pleased. She expects to be respected' (p. 249).

The spirit of Oliveros (2005, 2010), Robinson (2020), and Voegelin's (2019) writings is a call to listen and listen differently so that we can take action and do something different to the norm. My initial relationship with Gilbertson was based upon the notion that her engagement with the Grise Fiord settlement was an event from the past. However, listening to her and Inuit voices brought them into the political and spatial present: they no longer merely existed in the past, far away from us. Listening to Gilbertson's recordings, more than watching her film, sensorially interrupted my idea of her and Grise Fiord, stimulating a deeper responsibility to reject the norm of the closed, the conclusive, and the categorised. It called me to account.

6 Taking Time with Others

The third aspect of attention, following Attending (Chapter 4) and Listening (Chapter 5), is Taking Time. Taking time is the application of commitment: the Cambridge Dictionary (2022) defines commitment as 'something that you must do or deal with that takes your time'; the Oxford Dictionary (2022) suggests that this time requires a vitality, defining it as 'the willingness to work hard and give your energy and time to a job or an activity'. You cannot attend or listen with any sincerity unless you are driven to commit the time to do so. This chapter could have been called committing, but because this thesis examines practice, I will look at taking time and the energy required to exercise this.

In examining Gilbertson's motivation, Neely (2014a) and Jamieson (2019) acknowledge Gilbertson's commitment to the communities she filmed, first in Shetland then the Canadian Arctic. However, the study of her Grise Fiord diaries reveals the considerable depth of her commitment – the something that she *must* do by working hard and giving her energy and time – to the people she lives alongside, as she explores her own personal connections to the world in which she now lives (Neely, 2014a). In this chapter I reference these diaries and consider the activities and approaches she took to nurture and value the friends and community she made. Murdoch (1999) said the ability 'to direct attention is love' (p. 354). To help me theorize this activity I turned to bell hooks' (2001) writings about love and specifically the practice of a love ethic. Whilst hooks' writing about love does attend to romantic love, her focus in *All About Love* (2001) is about love expressed in the making of kin and community. hooks (2001) was a practitioner of the theories she develops, outlining the everyday thoughts, words and deeds it takes to make kin and community by way of the love ethic: 'care, commitment,

trust, responsibility, respect and knowledge' (p. 94) and 'integrity, and the will to cooperate' (p. 101).

It could be argued that Gilbertson's friendships with Inuit benefited her filmmaking projects and therefore her activity of friendship may be for a purpose. I shall consider whether Gilbertson, a practitioner of documentary filmmaking, perhaps one of the most extractive artforms, mined her friendships for the benefit of her films. Using her diaries, an account of herself, I look to illuminate her true motivations and ask, did the aggie come first?

Finally, I return to those who have written about Gilbertson's motivations and approach, to ask my final question: how was she able to sustain her commitment to living and filming with Inuit? It is through Lorde's (1984) concept of erotic power that I consider her drive to make kin and make films.

What does Gilbertson spend her time on?

The ordinary language philosopher, Sandra Laugier (2015), defines the ethos of care as 'everything we do to continue, repair, and maintain ourselves so that we can live in the world as well as possible' (p. 219). She writes about the way theorists have ignored the everyday acts of looking after that make our lives liveable, meaning they are unrecognised, ignored and unvalued. That those who carry out the vast majority of these acts are women and that they largely happen in domestic spaces, she says, tells us why.

hooks' (2001) love ethic 'presupposes that everyone has the right to be free to live fully and well' (p. 88), defining its approach to living based upon 'care, affection, recognition, respect, commitment, and trust, as well as honest and open communication' (p. 5). hooks' (2001) love ethic is Laugier's (2015) care ethic in the hands of a radical: the love ethic is a movement, an action for positive change. To hooks (2001), love is a verb, and an act of love is an act of resistance, to 'stand up' (p. 4) for those you care for. The positive change, hooks argues, is connection and the creation of community. When

Gilbertson looked to her friends in Hillswick in 1931 she had her 'first glimpse of redemptive love and caring community' (hooks, 2001, p. 134), the kind of community in which she could give, make and thrive. It takes courage to step into a new world, to make the 'choice to connect – to find ourselves in the other' (hooks, 2001, p. 93). By choosing to connect, we reject the fear that keeps us separate and not known.

It might be suggested that Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit may serve a similar purpose to hooks' (2001) love ethic, for example, four of the Piqujangit relate to the same material behaviours: Inuuqatigiitsiarniq, showing respect and a caring attitude towards others; Tunnganarniq, fostering good spirit by being welcoming, open and inclusive; Piliriqatigiinniq, working together for a common purpose; and Pijitsirniq, to serve and provide for family, community, or both (Karetak et al., 2017).

In choosing to connect, Gilbertson employs a number of approaches to instigate and develop friendship. These day-to-day activities and the emotional, mental and physical investments she made in her relationships are documented in her diaries. The care Gilbertson took to detail her actions in everyday life portrays love's reality (hooks, 2001). Arriving in mid-September with less than two months of light left, Gilbertson begins filming and recording sound, largely with Audlaluk. Alongside this she starts the process of connecting to the wider community, which she does by walking; visiting, which includes storytelling and shared activities; sharing food; and being in their time.

Walking

While this may appear a solitary activity, moving outwards from the self by going for a walk was a starting point and a continuing routine in Gilbertson's ethics of attention. Replicating her approach in *A crofter's life in Shetland* (1931),[115] by going out and walking around the settlement, not only does she familiarise herself with her environment, but

[115] Brown, J. (1931). Shetland diary January–July 1931. Item no. 4/6/10, NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.

she generates opportunities for encounters and engagement with people around her (in a small community you cannot look away or 'not see' people, something she learned from a very young age holidaying in Hillswick).

Visiting

In Shetland, Gilbertson records the value of visiting as a way to introduce herself[116] and nurture bonds.[117] Although not practiced by everybody and, because of TV and the internet, perhaps less so these days, in communities without 'movie houses, and bowling allies',[118] visiting is simply something to do.[119] Going to someone's house requires a fearlessness (hooks, 2001). Gilbertson, not prone to shyness, required courage. 'I boldly (I've been diffident till now) went to Josephee Flaherty's. He was reading his bible at a table but seemed glad to see me when he found I'd come visiting.'[120]

Jeff Todd Titon's (2008) ethnomusicology fieldwork research model places emphasis on 'knowing how to visit' (p. 38). To him, visiting amongst musicians is about cultivating 'respect, care, modesty, courtesy, exchange, and reciprocity' to establish 'a sound and hopeful relationship before "getting down to business"' (p. 38). While Gilbertson did not film many of the people she writes about visiting, she was undoubtedly creating a 'sound and hopeful' (Titon, 2008, p. 38) relationship with the wider community in which she filmed, whilst learning the rhythms of people, family connections and histories, Inuit food culture, social mores and their way of seeing the world to aid the formation of an understanding from which bonds and loyalty grew. These underpin her

[116] Brown, J. (1931). April 27 entry, from Diary January – July 1931. Item no. 4/6/10. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[117] Brown, J. (1931). February 18 entry, from Diary January – July 1931. Item no. 4/6/10. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[118] Scholes, P. (1977). Transcript from interview with Jenny Gilbertson, *Take 30* (P. Scholes, Interviewer). CBC Archive, Ottawa. Thesis research by Shona Main.
[119] Brown, J. (1931). February 20 entry, from Diary January – July 1931. Item no. 4/6/10. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[120] Gilbertson, J. (1977). November 14 entry, Arctic Diary Grise Fiord 1, 25.8.77 – 25.11.77. Item no. 4/6/26. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.

work. When visiting, Gilbertson would take part in shared activities, such as sewing[121] and playing cards,[122] something Elizabeth Telfer (1970) defines as 'joint pursuits' which, along with 'mutual contact' and 'reciprocal services' (p. 224), are the three conditions of friendship. Gilbertson also attended church and reluctantly went to the bingo to make friends with the locals.[123]

She also recounts storytelling about spirits[124] and polar bears[125] that stimulated sensation and reaffirmed the need for caution. In *Staying with the Trouble*, Donna Haraway (2016) writes that visiting and the stories we tell in nurturing connection is a way to create new entanglements and make kin – or oddkin – that allow us to reconfigure our relations with the earth and its inhabitants. By weaving connections, 'something interesting' can happen (p. 127). The role of storytelling is significant in both Shetland (Abrams, 2005) and Inuit culture (Karetak et al., 2017).

Haraway (2016) is clear, with visiting a kind of reciprocity, a relation of equality is required. You cannot just take, you have to give something of yourself. Nash (2010) argues that trust is the key factor is a filmmaker–filmed relationship and that the filmmaker showing or not hiding their vulnerability is significant in the building of a shared trust. Audlaluk recalls being moved by Gilbertson's showing love and loss when once she was unable to hide her grief for her late husband Johnny Gilbertson.[126] In Coral Harbour, Suzie Napayok remembers being in tent when Gilbertson, reading *The Hobbit* (Tolkein, 1966) to Suzie, stopped and started to cry. After, she admitted to thinking about Johnny.

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[121] Gilbertson, J. (1977). March 1, 1978 entry, Arctic Diary Grise Fiord 2, 21.12.77 – 27.3.77. Item no.19 4/6/27. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[122] Gilbertson, J. (1977). March 24, 1978 entry, Arctic Diary Grise Fiord 2, 21.12.77 – 27.3.77. Item no.19 4/6/27. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[123] Gilbertson, J. (1977). October 4, 1977 entry, Arctic diary Grise Fiord I, 25.8.77 – 15.12.77. Item no.18 4/6/26. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[124] Gilbertson, J. (1977). October 7, 1977 entry, Arctic diary Grise Fiord I, 25.8.77 – 15.12.77. Item no.18 4/6/26. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[125] Gilbertson, J. (1977). November 10 entry, Arctic Diary Grise Fiord 1, 25.8.77 – 25.11.77. Item no.18 4/6/26. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[126] Interview with Larry Audlaluk (2019, October 8). Thesis research by Shona Main.

This softened Suzie Napayok's idea of this tough old woman.[127] In showing her vulnerability, Gilbertson shares her power (crying is not powerlessness).

Gilbertson's time with people was not always pleasant or comfortable: on one occasion she learns of a deeply disturbing incident and sits with her distressed friend, listening, then playing cards.[128] There is no personal or filmic gain from this attending (some filmmakers may seize upon such darkness for chiaroscuro) it is just mutuality and a respectful sharing of pain and humour.

It is when Gilbertson has a visitor, Samwilly, who has come to fix her heating, that she learns of the Relocation, which she reports in her diary[129] before referencing in her voiceover of the film.[130] Gilbertson has been criticised for not engaging with Grise Fiord's 'historical trauma' (Larsson & Stenport, 2019, p. 82) and the 'troubled foundations' (Neely, 2014a, p. 305) of Grise Fiord. However, her diary, voiceover, and a Canadian press cutting[131] from 1988 (sent to Gilbertson by her Canadian business partner, Peter

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[127] Facebook private message from Suzie Napayok, January 29, 2019. Thesis research by Shona Main.
[128] Gilbertson, J. (1977). March 24 entry, Arctic Diary Grise Fiord 2, 21.12.77 – 27.3.77. Item no.19 4/6/27. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[129] 'Samwilly was telling me that in 1953 the government told people in Port Harrison and Pond Inlet that they would live in Grise Fiord. They would be transported there for no charge – everything, all their possessions from their houses, their canoes. komatiks, dogs, even their harpoons, all free. I'll have to get the details straight when eventually the houses went up in the Grise Fiord of today - the plane landed 3 miles away. People had to walk. Fairly recently in the 1970s the people got a petition and sent it to the Govt. If they didn't get a decent air service, they would all leave and go back to Port H and Pond I. The govt never replied to the letter but work was started at once on an airstrip and a road to it. I asked if they lived in tents and igloos when they first came to Ellesmere Island. 'Not igloos' said Samwilly. 'No snow.' Of course, no depth of snow anywhere around this bit of coast. 'Tent cold?' I said. 'No. Musk Ox skins on it.' The he tried to remember skins of another animal he used – not caribou or wolf. Samwilly was also concerned about the price of food … Eggs, he was in Montreal and saw eggs at 35 or 40c a dozen. 'I no take. Maybe they were bad'. In GF over 3 dollars a dozen. They should certainly be a good subsidy in Grise Fiord. None of the people would mind leaving. It's the govt. Wants to keep them here.'
[130] 'There was no official occupation of this land until 1952 when the Federal Government sent in a few Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Sometime later Inuit made their homes here helped by this Federal Government and so a settlement was established.' *Jenny's Arctic diary* (1978) (5:45).
[131] The article reads 'as Mr Audlaluk, who is now 38 years old and manager of the Co-op ... is grieving over the departure of a brother and sister and many other lifelong friends and hunting partners. He is anxious about the future of his close-knit traditional village ... it's a wait and see situation for the next six months or year'. It also refers to the lies told to them and their parents before they went on the boat. The article continues 'Mr Audlaluk acknowledged the hunting is good around Grise Fiord but he said his people were obliged to change from a diet of caribou, fish and birds to ring seals, walrus and polar bear. "The anger I have is for my parents being deceived ... my mother used to say where is all the fish and caribou they promised us?"' Fisher, M. (1988, September 9). Second exodus splits Inuit families taken from home in 1953, villagers with offer of return. *Globe & Mail*, Toronto. D 64/1/56. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

Cock featuring Audlaluk speaking about the Relocation), are the only evidence of it in her archive.

The report by the QIA (2014c, 2014d) into the Relocation includes devastating testimonies from Inuit who held onto the truth of what they endured following Relocation. Iqqaumavara (Lepage, Makivik Corporation, & The National Film Board of Canada, 2009) ('I remember' in Inuktitut),[132] a web-based 'collective memory' made during and after the filming of Lepage's documentary, *Martha of the North* (2009), about Martha Flaherty, who had been Relocated with her family from Inukjuak to Grise Fiord in 1955, includes testimony by Samwilly's wife, Louisa Elijassialuk (2009).

> My late husband's world of pain, I felt with him … But my poor husband was of many minds and he had difficulty expressing himself. He kept all his feelings inside. He wanted an apology which was not coming. He was hurting. He was in pain and I felt it with him. That's all.[133]

Madeline Allakariallak (2009) only learned her grandmother had been Relocated to Resolute Bay when they watched news of the Royal Commission of Aboriginal Peoples inquiry into The High Arctic Relocation (initiated in 1991 and reported in 1994):

> she revealed just how painful and heart-breaking her life was and how she endured that, and how she held to herself together and her daughters and her sons and her community and her neighbors, out of pure love, out of pure strength.[134]

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[132] Lepage, M., Makivik Corporation and The National Film Board of Canada. (2009). *Iqqaumavara*. Retrieved on December 17, 2022 from http://www.iqqaumavara.com/en/
[133] Lepage, M. (2009) Interview with Louisa Elijassialuk. *Iqqaumavara*. Retrieved on December 17, 2022 from http://www.iqqaumavara.com/en/louisa-elijassialuk/
[134] Lepage, M. (2009). Interview with Madeline Allakariallak. *Iqqaumavara*. Retrieved on December 17, 2022 from http://www.iqqaumavara.com/en/madeleine-allakariallak-her-story/

A reluctance to speak, and particularly to qallunaat, was confirmed to me by Audlaluk (2018).

> The Relocation story in 1977 was almost like something you didn't really talk about. I think the attitude was still too strong. It was a white man qallunaat issue and that we should be happy … they didn't want to hear. It's part of the old colonial attitude.[135]

The very first time the Relocation was publicly raised was by the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK)[136] in 1982: the government responded by offering the 16 Relocated families 'a small contribution towards transport costs' (Grant, 2016, p. i) to allow them to return home, but no apology or recognition of wrongdoing. Audlaluk added his voice around 1988 (he would later be honoured for his role[137]). In 1990 the ITK persuaded the House of Commons Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs to call for an independent inquiry into the High Arctic Relocation. This resulted in a series of reports: the Government-commissioned Hickling Report (1990) (no wrongdoing); The Canadian Human Rights Commission's Soberman Report (1991) (poor management and inadequate care, recommending that Inuit should thanked for their contribution to Canada's sovereignty); then the Canada's Royal Commission on Aboriginal People Report (Dussault & Erasmus, 1994) when the voice of Inuit Relocatees was sought and heard (Audlaluk gave his testimony). It found that Inuit did not volunteer to be Relocated: they had no choice but to go with the Canadian Government, who believed they needed 'rehabilitation' (Dussault

[135] Interview with Larry Audlaluk (2018, October 8). Thesis research by Shona Main.
[136] Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (2022) is an organisation that represents Inuit across their homelands (35% of Canada's landmass and 50% of its coastline). It was established in 1971 and was originally known as Inuit Tapirisat of Canada. Their mission statement reads: 'The National Representational Organization Protecting and Advancing the Rights and Interests of Inuit in Canada'. Retrieved on January 6, 2023 from https://www.itk.ca/
[137] Audlaluk became a Member of the Order of Canada in 2007 in honour of his service to the people of Grise Fiord.

& Erasmus, 1994, p. 78) after suffering 'moral decline' (p. 65). Shelagh Grant's (2016) report to the Canadian Arctic Resources Committee[138] found the government's key reasons for Relocating Inuit was to occupy the High Arctic and therefore secure Canadian sovereignty.

Jamieson (2019) states that it was 'inevitable' (p. 117) that Gilbertson knew the story we know now of the Relocation. However, having heard a first-hand account of the events and impact of the Relocation myself, I believe that, had Gilbertson heard this, she would have been deeply affected and moved by their psychological distress, disgusted as to their treatment and incensed as to the government's failure to recognise, apologise or recompense Inuit. And, like every other exchange she had, she would have documented this detail in her diary. I believe Gilbertson's desire, clearly evidenced in her commitment to 'justice' and 'truth telling' (hooks, 2001, p. 33), means that she would have spoken out. What can a filmmaker learn from Gilbertson's not knowing? In the 21st century, filmmakers are more cynical of governments and their agendas. We can look harder and ask more questions, of the world and of ourselves, but we must also be prepared to miss something.

Food

In Chapter 4, Gilbertson describes her first encounter with Jackie Napayok where he offers her Arctic char – perhaps a demand for recognition – which she accepts. Gilbertson rejected the culture of domination ('eugh, frozen fish!') and showed openness to Inuit ways, allowing the other to be (Weil, 2005).

Visiting also resulted in an offer to share seal blubber with a family[139] and an opportunity to grow her familiarity with people and place, deepen her knowledge and

[138] The CARC is a charitable organization dedicated to supporting the stewardship of Arctic ecosystems, and the social and economic well-being of Canada's northern people.
[139] Gilbertson, J. (1977). December 16 entry, Arctic Diary Grise Fiord 2, 21.12.77 – 27.3.77. Item no. 4/6/27. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.

sensitivity to Inuit culture and value hospitality. Country food, such as char, seal, walrus, whale, caribou, geese, ptarmigan, clams, berries, etc., is harvested locally by Inuit or obtained by kin elsewhere in Nunavut and sent to them (it is not unusual when boarding a plane to be given a bag of muktuk – whale skin – by a stranger to be collected by someone at your destination). It is difficult for most qallunaat to access unless you eat with Inuit, are given some by an Inuk or attend one of their community events (many Inuit equate the sale of country food with the bootlegging of alcohol (Searles, 2002, p. 195)). A willingness to make food and share was reciprocated by her Inuit friends:[140] 'to be Inuk is to share food, and to share food is to be Inuk' (Gombay, 2006, p. 520). Gilbertson did not refuse her hosts, whatever they offered her, recalling how, on one occasion after eating seal, she saw herself in the mirror, her 'lips red with blood'.[141] hooks (2001) considers recognition and respect as the foundation to the love ethic, and it goes both ways. Gilbertson grew to love frozen char and seal meat yet it was always food that her friends made. She stuck to making qallunaat food, appreciating 'the distance between ourselves and that which we love' (Weil, 2005, p. 293). Gilbertson fed visitors of all ages, with people knowing they could call in on her for coffee and she would listen (hooks, 2001, p. 157) and follow the rituals of reciprocity. Children came to visit, primarily for qallunaat food and comics. Adrian Searles (2002) writes how Inuit 'objectify' qallunaat food using it as a way to understand their difference as Inuit (p. 57). They were maybe in need of sustenance, for food was and still is eye wateringly expensive. When she learned scant details of the Relocation by Samwilly,[142] it was the cost of food in Grise Fiord that Samwilly emphasised that struck a chord with Gilbertson.

[140] Gilbertson, J. (1977). February 2 entry, Arctic Diary Grise Fiord 2, 21.12.77 – 27.3.77. Item no.19 4/6/27. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[141] Gilbertson, J. (1978). December 18 entry, Arctic Diary Grise Fiord 2, 21.12.77 – 23.8.78. Item no.19 4/6/26. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[142] Gilbertson, J. (1977). December 16 entry, Arctic Diary Grise Fiord 2, 21.12.77 – 27.3.77. Item no.19 4/6/27. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.

Walking towards the other, visiting them, feeding and being fed by them and enjoying their company are all examples of the nurturing of the care and affection of community that hooks (2001) believes is revolutionary: through sharing time and resources, they thwart the 'Capitalist-based notion … that there's not enough to go around' (p. 89). To be part of small a community requires a revolution of the self: it takes patience (which sometimes must be extended), generosity (when you have little to give), a foregrounding of others (often managing competing needs) and a commitment to visibility. There are some who struggle with seeing and being seen, needing and being needed. Gilbertson seemed to be able to sustain this activity; so long as she had her days of self-care, where she caught up with her diary, her letter writing and her film work, she was able to do this.

Entering their time, their perspective

Gilbertson operated in a time before consent forms. Her opening respect was to approach the Community Council to ask permission to film.[143] Audlaluk states 'people know her and recognise her work',[144] yet she did not overstate her status and may have held back on personal information, such as the amount of financial resources she (did not) have. Audlaluk knew of her Grierson connection, and was of the view that she was 'well-to-do'.[145] He seemed surprised that she was not wealthy (although this may be on the basis that we all think everyone else is wealthier than we are). One thing she never hid was her lack of technical ability: Audlaluk himself joined her in the battle against the tape recorder.[146]

Yet Gilbertson was a tough old woman and up for everything, including a seven-hour musk ox hunting trip in -50ºC (despite being in her seventies).[147] Gilbertson's diary,

[143] *Jenny's Arctic diary* (1978) (0:40).
[144] *Jenny's Arctic diary* (1978) (1:17).
[145] Interview with Larry Audlaluk (2018, October 8). Thesis research by Shona Main.
[146] JGASR GF1. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[147] *Jenny's Arctic diary* (1978) (31:43).

combined with a radio recording,[148] acutely describes the prolonged discomfort to her 76-year-old body when travelling 50 miles by qamutiik (sled) over very bumpy pack ice. Audlaluk commented that she 'never complained'.[149] Her diaries detail some very specific discomforts, including trying to go to the toilet when out hunting on the ice with four men.[150] Her good-natured response to challenges helped foster trust: Jackie Napayok liked how, when faced with difficulty, 'she laughed',[151] but noted that she was 'getting older and colder'.[152] Gilbertson was very glad they would take her on hunting trips and she fully understood the objective was not to be filmed but to get food for their families.

> They're like the Shetlanders. I was interested in their way of life, how they got their fire and their peat. I went out fishing with them. It was the same in the Arctic. I was a part of the community. I never asked anybody to do anything. None of it was ever acting. It was not easy to get a film of a seal hunt in a small boat ... where they didn't care whether I got the film or not as long as they got the seal.[153]

Nash (2010) argues that mutual trust is central to a consensual filmmaking relationship. Gilbertson trusted these men with her life. She showed her commitment to filming them and returned their trust by not being demanding, difficult, or complaining: as testified by the recording of the musk ox hunt.

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[148] Gilbertson, J. (Date unknown). Transcript, Jenny Gilbertson musk ox hunt. Radio recording for unknown broadcast. D64/3/61. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[149] Interview with Larry Audlaluk (2018, October 8). Thesis research by Shona Main.
[150] Gilbertson, J. (1977). October 1 entry, Arctic diary Grise Fiord I, 25.8.77 – 15.12.77. Item no.18 4/6/26. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[151] Interview with Jackie and Suzie Napayok (2018, November 22). Thesis research by Shona Main.
[152] Interview with Jackie and Suzie Napayok (2018, November 22). Thesis research by Shona Main.
[153] Greer, S. (October 4, 1987). The Inuit are still singing of filmmaker Jenny. *The Sunday Star.* 64/1/56. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

Gilbertson occasionally records delays when preparing to set off on a hunting trip: 'the waiting around was murder'.[154] It is commonplace for qallunaat to moan that Inuit do not keep to the (white, capitalist) clock. Gombay (2012) noted that the extremes of the environment in which Inuit live and how the stark life/death scenarios they face require them to spend a lot of time garnering information. Through looking and listening over time, read alongside stories of observations made over many years, they know if and when to act (Gombay, 2012). Gombay's (2012) study showed that ideas of place, life, death and time suggest a wholly different existential notion of control: they accept that they are not in control of their environment and embrace total flexibility. Despite the odd grumble, Gilbertson recognised that Inuit skill and knowledge in reading their environment, such as the temperature of the surface of the ice, which contributed to smoother, faster passage by qamutiik.[155] To the contemporary filmmaker, the act of waiting – with its corresponding budgetary, person power and health and safety and risks – frustrates time. There is no time to practice a lack of control. The reason why Gilbertson thrived as an Arctic filmmaker was the same reason that she struggled: because she did not have the commission, budget, kit/crew, agreed storyline and timescale. It was the last two, no predetermined narrative and no timescale, that in fact proved the richest resource. Unfettered, it allowed her to enter into Inuit time, an act of recognition and respect.

As Pryluck (1988), Winston (2008) and Nash (2010, 2011a, 2011b) agree, obtaining true informed consent is only possible if you share your fine edit alongside a genuine openness to change the edit to address issues or concerns. An act of openness

[154] Gilbertson, J. (Date unknown). Jenny Gilbertson musk ox hunt. Radio recording for unknown broadcast. JGASR. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[155] 'Nobody explained things to me, they just did things and I went along with it, so I couldn't think why we were still dithering about at 11 o clock at night with a 4 to 5 hour journey ahead of us. As usual, there was a good reason. The sun had softened the snow during the day and the Inuit were waiting for the surface to harden again in the lower night temperature. On a firm snow surface, skidoos don't bog down.' *Jenny's Arctic diary* (1978) (39:42 mins)

and honesty recognises and respects those who have been filmed and upholds the commitment to truth, which 'is the heart of justice' (hooks, 2001, p. 33). It necessitates genuine time and space to allow them to consider whether you have represented them, their lives, their work, their relatives, their community, in a way they are at ease with. As hooks (2001) states 'When we hear another person's thoughts, beliefs and feelings it is more difficult to project on to them our perceptions of who they are' (p. 49). Running against the principle of freedom of expression, this ethos shows what you intend to extract (Betasamosake Simpson, 2014). Sharing the fine edit may be worrying and destabilising for the filmmaker ('what if they object?') but is an act of reciprocity, giving them a choice.

Audlaluk recalls Gilbertson showing him and others the footage she had taken, specifically the dog team sequence which required sound to be added later, a task Audlaluk helped carry out at the last possible moment.[156] By 1978, unable to edit her own film, she contracted a London editing firm, Naden's, to edit *Jenny's Arctic diary* (1978) for her.[157] Whilst he had seen the footage, it would be interesting to ponder what Audlaluk, and others, may have said had they seen the fine edit, particularly with the voiceover.

With Gilbertson, did the aggie come first?

Whilst she clearly loved to make friends and be part of a community, did she mine her friendships to make her films? Aristotle (ca 335 B.C.E./2019) believed friendships could be either 'good or pleasant or useful' with the latter classed as a 'friendship of utility' (*NE*, viii 2 1156b 18–20). Weil (2005) is damning: 'there is always something horrible whenever a human being seeks what is good and only finds necessity' (p. 285) commenting on 'how

[156] Interview with Larry Audlaluk (2018, October 8). Thesis research by Shona Main.
[157] Gilbertson, J. (1980, October 20). Letter to David Naden. D64/1/30. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

we lie to ourselves' and 'manufacture sham advantages' (p. 286) to mask our exploitation.[158]

The situation of constraint and pushing is very much foreseeable when filming on a budget with a timescale, never mind the additional pressure of a pre-arranged storyline, a nervous commissioner and the intoxication of 'documentary desire', a 'desire-to-know' (Renov, 1993, p. 5), through that shot, that storyline, that film. Can we see a need, a domination in the way Gilbertson engages, the way she seeks help, the way she films? We see her readying, hopeful that the weather may allow her friends to take her out hunting.[159] We hear her being politely pushy when she asks whether a skidoo rider can take off and ride into the distance once more.[160]

Weil (2005) brings in an important point regarding the two-way nature of a friendship: 'If even a trace of the wish to please or the contrary desire to dominate is found in it. In a perfect friendship these two desires are completely absent' (p. 287). There are two parties in the relationship. Nash (2010, 2011a, 2011b), in her study of the experience of documentary participants, rejects Winston's (1988) notion that the filmmaker 'almost always has all the power' (p. 276). To argue this reduces the participant and denies them their agency, individuality and particularity. Nash (2010) argues both have their own reasons, agendas and strategies to achieve what they want from the film. In Grise Fiord, Inuit clearly had power: they let her know they wanted to dance alone,[161] they didn't feel like it today,[162] preferred to stay in bed,[163] or, in one case,

[158] I certainly toned down my 'benefits to the community' section in my application for a Nunavut Research License after reading Martha Flaherty's article 'Freedom of expression or freedom of exploitation' (1975) (essential reading to any researcher or filmmaker seeking to venture North with their camera). I was fooling myself that this research is of benefit to people in Grise Fiord: it is of benefit to me and to white knowledge and may have no meaningful value to Inuit.
[159] Gilbertson, J. (1977–78). Musk ox hunt, March 10-12 entry, Arctic diary Grise Fiord II, 21.12.77 – 24.3.78. Item no.19 4/6/26. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[160] JGASR GF4. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[161] Gilbertson, J. (1977–78). December 28 entry, Arctic diary Grise Fiord II, 21.12.77 – 24.3.78. Item no.19 4/6/26. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[162] Gilbertson, J. (1977). October 15 entry, Arctic diary Grise Fiord I, 25.8.77 – 15.12.77. Item no.18 4/6/26. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[163] Unable to get Grise Fiord's rock band out of bed. Gilbertson, J. (1977–78). February 23 entry, Arctic diary Grise Fiord II, 21.12.77 – 24.3.78. Item no.19 4/6/26. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.

were foul towards her,[164] just as much as they wanted to do things with her,[165] include her,[166] and while away the time, chatting.[167] Both she and her friends appear to keep their sense of self and their power: it flowed back and forth as time, circumstance and challenge dictated. 'The two friends have fully consented to be two and not one. They respect the distance which the fact of being two distinct creatures places between them' (Weil, 2005, p. 287). Friendship, like Nash's (2010) conceptualisation of power, is a reciprocity, because it goes both ways. Gilbertson was an older woman, alone in the Arctic, and turned up without anywhere to stay (she flew into Grise Fiord with her own supplies of food from the Resolute Bay Co-op, so as not to impose).[168] Aristotle's (ca 335 B.C.E./2019) separation of the purposes of a friendship ignores that giving and taking are part of the constant flow of utility, pleasure and good that is the actuality of almost every true friendship, anywhere.

Taking can be allowing people to give, and this is never more beautifully described by Gilbertson than when she finally finds a place to live, and her friends come to visit with things she will need, a mattress, a kettle, a basin.[169] I myself, experienced not having very much in Grise Fiord and was delighted when someone gave me an extra pillow, never mind the day a new spoon appeared.

There is an example of Gilbertson's resistance to taking or to mining a friendship that is of note. In her film she refers to a Grise Fiord elder, who had been one of the boys in Robert Flaherty's (1922) *Nanook of the North*. She does not mention in the film or in

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[164] Gilbertson, J. (1977-78). March 24 entry, Arctic diary Grise Fiord II, 21.12.77 – 24.3.78. Item no.19 4/6/26. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[165] Larry and Aaron ask her to join the seal hunt. Gilbertson, J. (1977). September 11 entry, Arctic diary Grise Fiord I, 25.8.77 – 15.12.77. Item no.18 4/6/26. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[166] Larry and Aaron and Manasie invite her to a second seal hunt. Gilbertson, J. (1977). September 15 entry, Arctic diary Grise Fiord I, 25.8.77 – 15.12.77. Item no.18 4/6/26. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[167] Speaking about spirits with Looty Pijamini. Gilbertson, J. (1977). October 7 entry, Arctic diary Grise Fiord I, 25.8.77 – 15.12.77. Item no.18 4/6/26. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[168] Gilbertson, J. (1977). September 1 entry, Arctic diary Grise Fiord I, 25.8.77 – 15.12.77. Item no.18 4/6/26. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[169] Gilbertson, J. (1977). March 3 entry, Arctic Diary Grise Fiord 2, 21.12.77 – 27.3.77. Item no. 4/6/27. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.

any interviews that also, in Grise Fiord, is one of Robert Flaherty's sons. This has since become a well-known fact, particularly as they were one of the families Relocated. This titbit would have been irresistible to some filmmakers, but not Gilbertson who was too attached to the family to betray their privacy.

Resolving conflict through commitment to community

In friendship and community it is important to acknowledge that there can be testing times. Gilbertson, like most of us, sometimes struggled with friendships. Within her papers are letters between friends and collaborators, Elizabeth Balneaves[170] and Evelyn Cherry, that reveal tension: the former was resolved, the latter (possibly about the status of who should be the director of their film *Prairie winter* (Gilbertson & Cherry, 1935)), was not.[171] Markings in red pen on later letters from her business partner and friend, Peter Cock, show her inner questioning of his statements and possibly intentions.[172]

There are two examples of conflict in Grise Fiord, both of which she documents in her diary, in a rare example of using an intimate space to be honest with herself (hooks, 2001). Gilbertson in the Arctic seems to have had particular problems with some of the qallunaat she lived with. This shows something of her character (she could be judgemental) and a recognition that they are visitors to an Inuit community, so were required to behave with sensitivity. In Grise Fiord she is shocked by her housemate's conduct, which she feels is unseemly. Concerned she is being seen to acquiesce (hooks, in Brosi, 2012) may have advised 'not to judge' (p. 79)), she uses her diary to think through what she can do (she wants to leave, but there is nowhere to go to). She does eventually find somewhere to stay and keeps on good terms with her former housemate.

[170] Balneaves, E. (1989, February, 5). Letter to Jenny Gilbertson. D64/1/39. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[171] Gilbertson, J. (1984, January 9). D61/1/34. Letter to Evelyn Cherry. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[172] Cock, P. (1989, April
19). Letter to Jenny Gilbertson. D64/1/39. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

Nothing else is said about it. At her new house, it is clear she is not wanted in the house and experiences an uncomfortable episode.[173] She finally finds a building to move into, yet says nothing to anyone about what has happened. Interestingly, Gilbertson represents her second housemate sensitively and warmly in the film: you would never know that theirs was a difficult relationship. Gilbertson's struggle to do the right thing by others and by herself and to avoid unpleasantness shows the sometimes-awkward shape of recognition and respect for difference. However, she continued to strive to be a friend and to keep making community. As hooks (in Brosi, 2012, p. 76) said,

> The truth is that you cannot build community without conflict. The issue is not to be without conflict, but to be able to resolve conflict, and the commitment to community is what gives us the inspiration to come up with ways to resolve conflict.

The power within Gilbertson

> I'll be darned if I can figure out why you'd want to take yourself, at a time when most people would like to just relax by a fire or retire by a nice picket fence or a cottage, to Canada's Arctic to film. And you were how old when you made your first trip?[174]

Why did Gilbertson go to the Arctic, and for nine years, far away from her family and friends, earning no money but spending all her teacher's pension and a large chunk of her savings to live and film in an extremely challenging environment with no guarantee that a broadcaster would show these films? How was she able to keep her door open to visitors

[173] Gilbertson, J. (1978). March 24, 1978 entry, Arctic Diary Grise Fiord 2, 21.12.77 – 27.3.77. Item no.19 4/6/27. NLSMIA, Kelvinhall, Glasgow.
[174] Scholes, P. (1977). Transcript from interview with Jenny Gilbertson, *Take 30* (P. Scholes, Interviewer). CBC Archive, Ottawa.

and to keep stepping outside with her camera and tape recorder? And why, at 76 years of age was she prepared to travel for seven hours on a hard wooden qamutiik that kept hitting huge solid lumps of pressure ice in -50ºC and desperate for a pee, all in the oft-dashed hope of some footage?

Neely (2014a) first describes how Gilbertson and Tait 'were compelled to make films independently and on a small scale' (p. 299) to suggest that Gilbertson, like Tait, outside of the industry, was forced by omission or circumstance to make films on her own, with her own funds, taking the entire risk. However, later in the same text, Neely (2014a) notes how both Gilbertson and Tait, along with Hutchison, were 'compelled to document and explore on paper and through the lens of a camera' (p. 300). This inner need for the feeling of satisfaction that comes from doing the work you must do is a profoundly powerful energy that these women shared. The film – or the aggie – was not the end in itself. It was the way in which Gilbertson documented and explored through making community that was the full expression of this power that compelled her.

Audre Lorde's (1984) essay, 'Uses of the erotic: the power of the erotic', builds a body of literature that rejects the popular understanding of the erotic. In the modern world we associate eros with romantic and sexual desire. It can be that, but it has a further classical meaning, a philosophical use, that of a principled, ethical desire for 'all good things and of being happy' (Plato Symposium 205dl-2): a reaching out of the soul for self-fulfilment or fruition. Interestingly, in the Symposium, Diotima describes how Eros is born to a mother, Penia (poverty) and a father, Poros (resource): coming together, they create a transformation. Eros is considered by some to be a generative desire for life, love, creativity, sexuality and satisfaction – the life instinct that is opposed to Thantos, the (self) destructive violence, the death instinct.

Murdoch (1999) considered eros a mode of ethical being, allowing the re-orientation of love towards transcendent good. hooks (1994), in her consideration of the

erotic in the classroom, lamented the rationalist separation of body and mind: to erase the body erases sensation. It is worth noting (remembering) that Panagia's (2009) key point is that it is sensation that disrupts the narratocracy. hooks (1994) – who may be speaking about teachers but could be speaking about anyone seeking to understand and encourage the other – warns that we should not become 'disembodied spirits' (p. 193, quoting Jane Gallop, 1988). You must recognise the force of the erotic (hooks calls it a force not a power) to be able to bring your whole self – your whole body – to the task.

Lorde (1984) moves the erotic even further away from its association with sex, instead acknowledging that recognising and allowing feeling offers a knowledge and a power that creates a deep satisfaction. It is 'the personification of love in all its aspects', a 'creative energy empowered' (p. 89). It is not a desire. Nor is it a determination. I first wondered whether erotic power was similar to the contemporary buddhist concept of ichinen, but this is more of a state of mind than a source upon which to draw.

Caleb Ward (2022) outlines the three elements of Lorde's theory of erotic power: that you must *feel* the work; in doing so you make new knowledge about the self, community and the environment; and, through connecting with others, with full recognition and respect, you counteract oppression. This political aspect of Lorde's erotic brings the search for satisfaction outside of the self and into the realm of others. Whilst it can be pleasurable, it is not about pursuing your own pleasure, it is about transformation of the self and the world.

Lorde (cited in Will,[175] 1976, and quoted in Ward, 2022) wrote for 'any human being who can be touched, reached, by my work, by my words' (p. 3), but particularly for black and marginalised women, and those oppressed by poverty, racism, exploitation, objectification, and heteronormativity. Lorde (1984) identifies that 'every oppression must

[175] Will, G. (1976). Contemporary women poets. Woman Series. Buffalo, NY: WNED. American Archive of Public Broadcasting. Retrieved on December 15, 2022 from https://americanarchive.org/catalog/cpb-aacip_81-2908ksv8#at_770.559_s.

corrupt or distort those various sources of power within the culture of the oppressed that can provide energy for change' (p. 53). Lorde (1984) knows there is a deep well of power inside the oppressed, but so does the oppressor, who squashes down on those who try to offer difference or transformation.

Gilbertson, a young white middle-class educated woman had no experience or possibly knowledge of the oppression that Lorde's (1984) key audience experience. Yet, Lorde's writing illuminates something of Gilbertson's energy and purpose as she broke free from the suffocating requirement of women in the 1920s and 1930s to conform by making her own way in the world as a woman. In her own polite way, Gilbertson rejected domination. She describes the 'bitter and unhappy times'[176] as she began to reject the expectation of her Victorian mother who sought 'total obedience'[177]: there was an expectation Jenny Brown would not marry but look after her mother. Like most women of the time, the need for respectability could have supressed her desire for something else, something better (Lorde, 1984). A small inheritance afforded a trip to London in 1930, where, as she learned about the film camera and the possibility of films, she made a decision that revealed her true driving force – her erotic power. She could have stayed there in the metropolis, perhaps finding her way into the burgeoning film industry. But, no. What really motivated her, enlivening her sense of purpose, was heading Northwards to Shetland, where, free from expectation, she could make new connections, make community, make a new way of being. Her new way of being was filming. Self-taught, self-funded (the remains of the inheritance: she never had much money but was incredibly resourceful with what she had), living over a long period of time with a community completely disconnected from the film industry, meant that she chose the

[176] Gilbertson, J. (1987). The growing years. Autobiography. D64/5/2. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[177] Gilbertson, J. (1987). The growing years. Autobiography. D64/5/2. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

hard way to do it. Nevertheless, her passion burned through the things that may have held her back.

Furthermore, I would argue that widowed, retired and in her late sixties, a time when so many women feel as if their best days are behind them, she rejected the status quo, the idea that she might 'relax by a fire' and drew upon that 'deep well of power' to do the same again, this time to go far beyond herself or any expectation to live and film in the Arctic. Within her body of Arctic films, plus the detailed diaries of her time, there is evidence of this – the exercise of this 'deep well of power' upon which she drew to quietly strive, connect, and learn about Inuit.

Evans (2012), Neely (2014a), and Brownrigg (2016) reference Gilbertson's need to leave the life expected of her. Jamieson (2019) states that 'Gilbertson wanted to educate' (p. 118), referencing her later pleas with the BBC over the 'the importance of putting right the idea of the Inuit'[178] (p. 117), while Brownrigg (2016) notes her desire to 'enlighten the uneducated masses in "the South"'.[179] Jamieson (2019) stressed the frustration Gilbertson felt as she ended her years unable to finish the films that lay unedited in Ottawa's Museum of History (then the Museum of Man) and therefore of no use to Inuit or those 'in "the south"'. However, there is evidence in the eyes of the leading Inuit political organisation that her desire was partially fulfilled:

> We are certain that the film would be extremely useful as an educational tool for introducing southerners to the Inuit, and that it could be an aid to correcting some of the misconceptions about Inuit life which we often encounter in the south.[180]

[178] Gilbertson J. (1982 April 15, 1982) Letter to Anthony Issacs, Producer of the BBC's The world about us. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[179] Brown, J. (1931). *A Fetlar wedding* typescript. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.
[180] Goo, O. Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (1986, February 5). Letter to Jenny Gilbertson. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

This can be appreciated by considering Gilbertson's persistence. Gilbertson's papers in the Shetland Museum & Archives heave with documents from 1931 until her death that evidence her lifeforce: ideas for films, articles and letters to publishers (newspapers and magazines) about the subjects of her films, and, while she was teaching (in the mid-1940s until 1968), scripts for radio and the community theatre festival she was involved in. Her papers also contain bulging folders marked 'Rejections'. Yet, she kept going.

Lorde (1984) says, 'the erotic is not a question only of what we do; it is a question of how acutely and fully we can feel in the doing' (p. 88). Audlaluk shared the deep joy of the fullness of their connection when he described how, after filming, Gilbertson and he would have a cup of tea, and talk and laugh about what they had been doing before moving on to films (Audlaluk has a remarkable love and knowledge of film), life, and family. Occasionally she would talk about Johnny Gilbertson:

> She spoke of him as her Johnny and you could tell she was in love … when she spoke of Johnny it was almost as if she would detach herself and she became romantic Jenny Gilbertson.[181]

Ward (2022) writes that a crucial element of Lorde's (1984) conception of erotic power is the creation of coalition-building which comes from an 'embodied personal connection … trust built on the basis of shared vulnerability' (p. 27). Audlaluk's recollection shows Gilbertson sharing her whole feeling self with him, allowing them both to recognise and honour love: an act of resistance, re-enacted every time Audlaluk remembers and shares, and as I write, and you read, this.

This persistent desire to connect with others is, as Lorde (1984) writes, the erotic power that fuelled her day-to-day commitment to people through her friendships, her

[181] Interview with Larry Audlaluk (2018, October 8). Thesis research by Shona Main.

curiosity, her verve and her practice of attention. It is what made her carefully record her everyday visits and conversations in her diary, even when they do not seem remarkable. It is what made her listen and love the mundane. And it is what kept her in the Arctic well into her seventies making films. Her financial records show outgoings that far outweigh any income.[182] She clearly was not in this for the money.

[182] D64/6. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

7 Exegesis

> We create art to connect with others, to connect with ourselves, and often just for the sake of it. We experiment with our art in order to push boundaries, to ask questions, to learn more about our art and our role within it. This is nothing new … What emerges, then, from this methodology, is the exegesis that accompanies the creative work: that knowledge that has remained implicitly within the artist, made explicit and seated within the context of the scholarly field.
>
> (Skains, 2018, p. 85)

The film *What am I doing here?* (2023) is a document of an encounter with Gilbertson. While this was not face-to-face, I have embraced the rules of a Levinasian (1969) encounter. It explores my experience of being 'with' her in Grise Fiord through intimate engagement with her sound recordings, film, interviews and the place and people she loved.

Moving between and inside the two time frames – Gilbertson in Grise Fiord in 1977–78 and my own in 2018 – it is a document of encounters in fieldwork: relational (with Gilbertson, Audlaluk, the community, the self), political (of the history of Inuit, the politics of being and filmmaking on Inuit territory, the politics of possibility) and sensorial (of the sound of Gilbertson in the Arctic, the aesthetic of the Arctic settlement, the feelings stirred by such an exploration). My use of her sound recordings, her own film (using its original aspect ratio), and interviews with her about her work, embodies the archival research, while my interviews, my own footage, field recordings and the editing

process together exemplify how the theory, explored in this written thesis, challenged, shifted and liberated my filmmaking practice.

When I arrived in Grise Fiord, I was not just stepping onto Inuit territory, I was stepping into a world Gilbertson had shared with her friends: I was the 'external, foreign alien' (Eriksson & Sørenson, 2012, p. 3). I am very grateful that I was allowed into the space of that friendship. My focus was Gilbertson, yet to find out more about her I engaged with her Inuit friends, and fully, which required recognition and respect for history (which I had begun to learn) and their distinct life in the Arctic. I was glad of Levinas' (1969) warning about resisting the urge to totalise and make them 'play roles' (p. 21).

Some notes on the film's construction

The principles with which I edited were:

1. In wishing to foreground Gilbertson's work, I worked under the basis that *Jenny's Arctic diary* (1978) will be shown prior to any screening of my film.
2. For all archival film and radio footage, I used the copyright exception of fair dealing on the basis of non-commercial research and private study, and criticism and review. With regards to *Jenny's Arctic diary* (1978). I am confident those excerpts I have used are justified and not excessive.[183]
3. That this film stimulates engagement with the archive and generates the political possibility for justice.

[183] Archive material is credited throughout the film using titles. However, flickering electricity and slow internet meant the final version of the film, which includes a redesign of the rolling credits with a section on archival sources used, was not able to be completed for submission. However, these credits – detailing each of the resources by Jenny Gilbertson, CBC and BBC and acknowledging Jenny Gilbertson, The Gilbertson Family, NLSMIA and the Shetland Museum & Archives – will appear in every other version of the film.

An 'unpeopled ethnography'

I had already considered not filming Inuit when I went to Grise Fiord but had not voiced this. I had obtained the ethical clearance from my institution, yet wondered whether it might be a disappointment to those who helped crowdfund the project: the thing Gilbertson is best known for is filming people and I was meant to be following in her footsteps. I did switch on the camera for one of my interviews with Audlaluk and, on two occasions, for a short burst of filming Inuit; Olaf cutting a narwhal, and Aamon a walrus. However, I felt great discomfort and turned the camera off. This crisis of confidence (after much chanting) became a commitment not to film Inuit, not to extract from Inuit and to move my film towards an 'unpeopled ethnography'[184] (Hurdley, 2010, p. 517). This commitment opened a new creative space beyond the ethical boundary. In thinking back to my expectant audience, Smith's (2020) concept of the Maladjusted Spectator reminded me that 'she expects to be respected' (p. 249).

Editing the footage of the settlement, I was anxious that my unpeopled footage was bereft of the human, political, cultural and social – both explicit and implicit. However, excerpts of *Jenny's Arctic diary* (1978), her sound recordings, and my own conversations with Audlaluk brought human voice into the film. My deeper listening to these sounds during the edit, stimulated an ethic and aesthetic that was sound-led, moving back and forth between Gilbertson's listening otherwise and my own.

My audience

Aufderheide et al. (2009) and Sanders (2012) suggest that loyalties shift in the edit suite, from your subject(s) to the audience, on the basis that 'the film' requires it. I had always

[184] Rachel Hurdley had set out to study the interactions in a 'corridor of power' in her institution, but the nature of ethical clearance granted effectively excluded participants. After much trial and error – and an interesting exploration of the sonic space – she moved away from conventional qualitative face-to-face research model towards 'a montage of fieldwork footage, soundscapes, participants' photographs, and video clips of interpretively resonant places and interactions' (p. 518). I was granted clearance by my institution to interview and film people but, after ethical deliberation, denied myself access. Either way we both found a creative space beyond set ethical boundaries.

said that the audience for my film will be Gilbertson's family, the people in Grise Fiord, and those interested in women filmmakers and documentary. However, Smith (2020) talks about those who are interested to learn about your love and your being in the world: the Maladjusted filmmaker's films are about their love of the Maladjusted Spectator who 'grabs hold of the hand that reaches out to her from the screens and she Hangs On!' Importantly, the Maladjusted Spectator will not eat that which is served on a spoon (p. 249). Whilst the spirit of Gilbertson and my (our) Inuit friends were with me at every cut and every transition, the idea of the Maladjusted Spectator freed me from tidying and telling, reminding me that she can draw her own conclusions (Bruzzi, 2000).

Intertitles

My use of intertitles is a nod to Gilbertson's early films. She used these to convey humour,[185] the poetic,[186] and socio-political statements.[187] I used these to articulate my learning from Gilbertson and from the process of attending to her: some of my learning, such as 'Cherish the life of the person in front of you' (Ikeda, 2016, n.p.), comes from buddhism, not Gilbertson. These intertitles chapterise the film, bringing the fragmentary nature of experiences together. My intention is to add subtitles, in English and in Inuktitut, but I will need to work with a title designer to ensure I do not overload the screen with text. My impaired vision has also led me to explore turning this into a sound piece or radio programme.

Two guiding dynamics: 'start with the sound' and stop Colonising

Start – and restart – with the sound

Resisting an over-reliance on the eye, Derrida (1984) says we must 'shut our eyes in order to be better listeners' (p. 29). During this project, my choices (not to film people)

[185] 'A bloodless battle.' *A crofter's life in Shetland* (1931) (3-10:23).
[186] 'Leaving the loneliest men in Britain.' *A crofter's life in Shetland* (1931) (3-13:28).
[187] 'And every woman in Shetland knits for it is one of the few ways they can make money.' *A crofter's life in Shetland* (1931) (4-1:31).

and my circumstances (my deteriorating vision) conspired to make the best conditions for me to be liberated – and healed – by the theory.

A USB stick with Gilbertson's Arctic sound recordings was sent by the Shetland Archive to me in Grise Fiord, allowing me to walk around and hear her as she recorded the settlement. In some of Gilbertson's recordings I felt nervous listening in. They are of disembodied Inuit voices, whose faces, bodies, lives and knowledge have historically been extracted by qallunaat without regard, recognition or recompense (Betasamosake Simpson in Klein, 2013). Derrida (1996) stated that the archive is a repository but is also the future: how we respond to it is both a 'promise and a responsibility for tomorrow' (p. 36). These recordings, and some of my own, stimulated my thinking about how to care for and cherish the person, the place, the thing in front of me.

Gilbertson used her sound recordings to 'match the picture'.[188] The slates, detailing who, where and when she recorded, offer a lot in the way of unintentional sound (e.g., her asking something of the person she is recording, a coffee machine dripping away in the background, her distress at a buzzing noise). These offer glimpses of Gilbertson's interactions and context. I used a Zoom H4n for my recording and I took to wearing a lavaliere mic attached to a pocket sound recorder to try to catch things I said to myself while I walked with a GoPro (directed straight ahead, but lowered to avoid faces I may have encountered). I notice I sniff a lot at around -25ºC. Whilst I still aspire to 'clean audio', to deny reality would divest the richness of my experience.

In the opening sequence, one of Gilbertson's recordings illustrates the fun Audlaluk had with Gilbertson's tape recorder while he was fixing it. He played with the role of the ethnographer, interviewing a subject, the 'Eskimo', called 'nobody', from

[188] JSASR GF12. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

'somewhere'.[189] His use of the word Eskimo to describe himself[190] was not unusual in 1977,[191] and was used in jest to me on my visit.[192] Gilbertson, in another recording, is careful to use the word Inuit in the film's voiceover and interviews that followed, although she herself sometimes slipped up.[193]

I was invited to join Dr Sylvie LeBlanc, Territorial Chief Archaeologist of Nunavut, on a boat trip to the Lindstrom Peninsula, where Inuit were Relocated in 1953 and 1955. In the edit, I wanted to give the entire sonic space to Audlaluk, so we can hear the very special quality of his voice as he shared his account of the Relocation and the way in which it happened. Having only ever heard media interviews of him and his contributions to *Nutaunikut [Exile]* (2009) and *Iqqaumavara* (2009), it was very moving to hear this recollection. Speaking about his disabled sister's (Anna Aqiatusuk) experience, the 'environmental cultural shock' the family experienced, and the breaking of his father's heart, moved this interview beyond testimony into an existential remembering of that time, underpinned by the constant sense of betrayal his family felt: they had been told they could go home. I have used a number of Audlaluk's recollections of Gilbertson's way of working and his encouragement to me.

In the graveyard I did not film. Instead, I wanted to use black screen, not to 'evoke absence' (Misek, 2017, p. 49) but to create a pause for respect, using the slate and field recording of that day (motorbikes, ravens) to evoke my sonic meditation. I used black screen again for the musk ox sequence. I did not go out hunting with Inuit in Grise

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[189] 'JG: Larry Audlaluk testing the tape recorder in his house after repairing it.' LA: 'testing 1 2 3 … This is a recording of an Eskimo speaking English (laughing). Testing 1 2 3 Sounds very good. What's your name? Nobody. Where do you come from, nobody? Somewhere. I see it's cold today. Yeah.' JGASR GF17A. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

[190] 'Jenny Gilbertson gets along with everybody really well, you know, not just the Eskimos.' Sound recording of Larry Audlaluk talking about filming with Jenny Gilbertson then a Grise Fiord Community Council Meeting (issues with tape recorder). JGASR GF17A. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland.

[191] The term Inuit was adopted by the Inuit Arctic Circumpolar Conference in 1977 (Armstrong & Brody, 1978, p. 177).

[192] When an Inuk friend asked me to join them for food, I was offered a piece of cardboard which he quipped was 'an Eskimo plate'. Inuit often cut up and eat their country food on cardboard on the floor.

[193] Gilbertson, J. (1977). Transcript from interview, Take 30 (P. Scholes, Interviewer). CBC Archive, Ottawa. Thesis research by Shona Main.

Fiord. I fully support their inalienable right to hunt but their lived experience makes them much better documenters of this. The musk ox sequence uses an unknown radio recording of the event and an extract from her film. I wanted to leave the screen black so that the audience can attend to her telling of this memory, all the vivid detail (Gilbertson was the most glorious pedant), and her various *emphases* so they themselves can imagine the journey and hunt for a musk ox.

In the sequence in the film where I drive round and round the settlement, I used interviews from CBC and BBC to exemplify the way that male interviewers spoke to Gilbertson, who they saw as a daring granny, and how they spoke about Inuit. Her polite but firm advocacy for Inuit is striking, a reminder that it is sincerity not hyperbole that matters; an encouragement for those who are not skilled in rhetoric to stand up for what they believe by being themselves. Profound, too, is her respect (admittedly following deep sighs) when presented with ignorant questions: she keeps her poise and honours the responsibility she has taken to speak. I amassed several of her sighs and considered a wave-form montage of frustration, but retreated out of regard for the seriousness in which she took to her task.

Gilbertson used her voice to author her last two films. I used my own voice as a way to try to document and understand injustice. Unfairness at the demise of the seal skin industry (which is, in my view, much more thoughtful and restrained than qallunaat industrial meat and leather production); of the alarming cost of living for Inuit who help to secure Canada's sovereignty; and the slaughter of the qimmiit (dogs) (QIA, 2014e). I do not like the sound of my own voice but if I want to reveal to the audience not just my 'process of construction' (Ruby, 2000, p. 170), but also the formation of my thoughts, responsibility and reciprocity, I must 'stand up' (hooks, 2001, p. 90) for those I care about.

Stop Colonising

Robinson (2020) considers the settler (or non-Indigenous person's) tendency to extract, assimilate and stay within the narratocracy (Panagia, 2009). While these are Robinson's concepts, these provided me with the starkness that I required to stand up to these tendencies.

Extraction

My decision to not film Inuit resisted further extraction of them aesthetically and ethically. During my time there, I made a friend who remembered Gilbertson and she came round on two occasions to watch Jenny's Arctic diary (1978) and tell me who was in it. I recorded this but only to obtain a full record of those in the film and a level of accuracy, especially around Inuit names, but did not intend to use it in the film.

Back in Shetland and editing my peopleless ethnography I felt a lack of human presence in my representation of Grise Fiord. I was aware of Project Naming by Library and Archives Canada (2002), which uses photographs (often unnamed) to bring Inuit elders and youth together to piece together their past; and the social media work of Paul Seesequasis (2019) to find the names and histories to the many nameless photographs of Canada's First Nation, Metis and Inuit. Gilbertson names those she filmed doing things in her film, but not everyone. I explored editing a few sequences from *Jenny's Arctic diary* (1978) with the recording I made with my friend, played alongside them, contextualising the image in terms of who was in then, who they were related to and a few lovely stories. Of the recordings that were usable (it was not a clean recording), this worked brilliantly. However, it felt wrong. During recording, my friend had been nervous about getting names right. Moreso, this recording had been made very informally and not for the purpose of a soundtrack. The good faith it had been made in was that it was never intended to be made public. The reality that I had to grasp was that my friend's feelings and friendship were more important to me than this iteration of the film.

I have been considering how to distinguish between a problematic desire and erotic power (Lorde, 1984), as they both have an energy and a determination. This is not conclusive but perhaps a desire that is problematic involves someone submitting, whereas erotic power is a feeling, a source of knowledge and power (resistance to oppression) and moves the holder and those she works with to create positive change. No one has to submit to erotic power.

Assimilation

Deep listening (Oliveros, 2005) and critical listening positionality (Robinson, 2020) to the recordings of the classroom in Chapter 5 revealed the everyday process of assimilation. Listening to the small acts of resistance to their teacher, the gentle Coloniser, I was aware I was listening to the utterances (Panagia, 2009) of children, two of whom would go on to be political figures in Nunavut. It felt like a sonic clash of the past and the present, not so much a crystal image (Deleuze, 2013) as a crystal sound (it was uncanny they were learning to spell the word crystal). I sought to fuse this recording of 1977 with this present moment by taking part in Martha Kiguktak's Inuktitut lesson, where I practice my syllabics (Aileen Ireland helped me identify the words). I do this as an act of solidarity.

Narratocracy

Robinson (2020) also notes the settler tendency to stay within Panagia's narratocracy (2009). Gilbertson rejected the visual narratocracy of the "great white north', "frozen wonderland", or peripheral "terra incognita"' (Thoreson, 2016, p. 2), a place where nothing happens (MacKenzie et al., 2016) and Inuit who struggle to fit into modern times (Arnaquq-Baril & Wolfe, 2019). Uneasy that my unpeopled ethnography suggests inactivity, I used the sound of the Arctic reality: the endless man-made sounds of the utility trucks, generators, skidoos and 'the health and safety noise', harmonised by ravens mimicking the electricity cables.

The sequence where Audlaluk discusses the recording of the sound for Gilbertson's dog team sequence ends with me playing Gilbertson's recording of dogs,[194] to dogs I regularly passed in 2018. It was tempting to end the sequence on this lightsome note, but this would deny the spectre of the qimmiit, the thousands of Inuit dogs slaughtered by the RCMP in an attempt to keep Inuit in the settlements (QIA, 2014e), I do not want the audience to *not* know this.

Inuktitut, a sincere act of solidarity and resistance

Online Inuktitut lessons were one part of my morning rituals – a habit of Gilbertson's – including making coffee, writing my diary (including my diary of tweets), sorting my footage and learning Inuktitut. While work was being done to the Anglican church next door, I regularly made (and regularly forgot to make) coffee for the qallunaak workmen's breaks. I spent a lot of time with those two brothers who were tending to a loving renovation.

Gilbertson had attended services there and sang from her Inuktitut hymn book, which her daughter, Ann Black, gifted to me. 'Will Your Anchor Hold' (Owens, 1882) was a favourite of hers (and of Shetlanders) and has been sung at the funerals of many loved ones. I asked Audlaluk – a lay preacher – if the church was completed before I left would they sing 'Will Your Anchor Hold' (Owens, 1882) for Gilbertson and for me. They were unable to hold a service before I left but I wanted to sing it anyway. Aileen Ireland, the daughter of teachers who taught in Coral Harbour and who had known and loved Gilbertson, agreed to sing it with me. Through our connection and this act, we have established a friendship, a testament to the community Gilbertson sought in the Arctic. Armand Tagoona (Laugrand, & Laneuville, 2019), the Inuk pastor and founder of the first Inuit church did not so much translate the words to 'Will Your Anchor Hold' (Owens, 1882) as to completely reconceive it, taking it out of the thrashing sea and onto the ice. I

[194] JGASR GF3. The Jenny Gilbertson Collection, Shetland Museum & Archives, Lerwick, Shetland

do not think I have ended my ethical and sonic enquiry into this hymn: there is more to this. Meanwhile, I will continue to try to learn Inuktitut as an act of solidarity and resistance to the precarity of Indigenous languages. Whilst a hybrid of Shetland, the North East of Scotland and Dundee, my parents were Doric speakers and I diligently practice this as a respect to them.

'She told me that, if you want to do something worthwhile, it's tedious, you have to be very committed to it, you gotta do it'

A reality in my work and ethics is responding to fear. Gilbertson's vision was open, and she allowed things to happen. She did not express fear of getting things wrong or show uncertainty: as Heather Tulloch said, 'she was very definite in everything she did and the decisions she made'.[195]

Through reading Robinson (2020), I asked: Am I extracting from Gilbertson? Am I assimilating her? What have I done to disrupt the narratocracy around Gilbertson? And of course, the words of my father: 'fit is it you're afraid a' happening?' I am afraid of trampling on her, of presenting her in a way that suits me, of flattening and flattering her contours: totalising her (Levinas, 1969).

This fear created hesitancy. Hesitancy, in large, has created a positive respectful pause for me to unself (Murdoch, 1970/2001) and for the other to manoeuvre. However, hesitancy can cause me not to respect the other's time and, if not interrogated, can result in a crippling of my confidence. A solution to this is to, stop, to think *What am I doing here?* The answer to that is to foreground the other, identify where my loyalty really lies (them!) and see what possibilities come from that. Then, in the words of Audlaluk 'you gotta do it'.[196]

[195] Interview with Heather Tulloch (2018, December 8). Thesis research by Shona Main.
[196] Interview with Larry Audlaluk (2018, October 8). Thesis research by Shona Main, and *What am I doing here?* (Shona Main, 2023) (50:05).

The generative nature of thinking, caring filmmaking

Being a buddhist filmmaker, I am aware that I am bringing something into being. Similar to the principle of ichinen sanzen, there was always three thousand and multiplying films that it could have been. I created definite boundaries but returning to the archive, particularly Gilbertson's sound recording and the political context, I was able to move into an ethical space beyond. The decision to have an unpeopled ethnography resulted in an excavation, then a bringing together of Gilbertson's archival recordings, and interviews with her, with my own sound recording and interviews. Deciding not to use the recording of my friend naming and contextualising those Gilbertson filmed, made me honour my friendship – helping me to see my true self (hooks, 2001) – and explore the use of my own voice to respond to time.

I also missed taking a serious look at the cost of food and climate change. Thoreson (2016) suggests that it is a filmmaker's responsibility to capture what we are about to lose; but they wanted to talk about other things) and, I am very aware, Gilbertson's Johnny is missing. This is an iteration of some of my experiences in Grise Fiord with Gilbertson, sharing some of the things I have learned during this time. Having this mentality helps to keep it open to challenge and suggestion when I share the fine edit with Audlaluk, my other Inuit friends, and Gilbertson's family as we prepare for the public version of their contributions and my thoughts. Johnny may well walk into it yet.

Coda

This short postscript is for my Inuit friends, showing me back home with the things we talked about and thinking about them as I live and film within my community. This is a response to Suzie Napayok's plea as she agreed to help me: 'Stay with us, Shona.'[197]

[197] Facebook message from Suzie Napayok (2018, May 17). Thesis research by Shona Main.

8 Conclusion

The question this thesis asked was: What contemporary filmmakers can learn from Jenny Gilbertson's ethical approach of attending, listening and taking time?

I have shown that Gilbertson did not articulate her ethical approach, she embodied it. Her drive for friendship and community generated the opportunities to encounter and engage with the other – by attending to these connections over time, she learned about their life, in their time, and this is what she communicated in her films.

Through the archive, fully revealed as a site of responsibility and possibility (Derrida, 1996), I examined Gilbertson's practice of attention. Turning to the theories around attending, listening and taking time, I used these to challenge the way I see and listen to the other. The process, described in this thesis and captured in my film, *What am I doing here?* (2023), liberated my thinking and actions, reviving my sense of purpose and capacity to make connections with the other and the world: relationally, politically, sonically and visually.

Resituating Gilbertson's practice of attention in the present day, it was crucial to learn some of the now known history of Inuit and the 40 years of political, cultural and social change since she filmed in Grise Fiord, accessing knowledge that Gilbertson did not have. I developed a number of sensibilities through the practice of attention: how to unself (Murdoch, 1970/2001); noticing what gets in the way of it; and how to foreground the other to generate new possibilities for the relationship and the film. hooks (2001) said if you want to be a truth teller you have to tell the truth to yourself. With Robinson (2020), I have identified the tendencies of qallunaat filmmakers on Inuit territory (actual and digital), noticing how easy it is to take from the other, make them fit your ideas and then tell the story that continues their assimilation and 'the worst possible violence'

(Derrida, 2003). Acknowledging the fear of taking and offending, and thereon the possibility of failure (Voegelin, 2019), it is through the sincere appreciation of the connections made through tending, listening and taking time with people, that you can think and care your way through the filmmaking – or any making – relationship and stop Colonising.

It is hoped that this thesis will motivate more, new, different scholarship on Gilbertson. After submission, I aim to continue the work of cataloguing Gilbertson's archive, seeking Inuit assistance in describing her archive recordings and images. One of my Inuk friends and I are exploring a project using one of Gilbertson's earlier Arctic films, allowing those who are in it and their loved ones to reclaim their stories.

My study of Gilbertson shows that, operating beyond 'antagonism and opposites' (Voegelin, 2019, p. 18), she was very much a political filmmaker, who, in her own polite way, honoured and stood up for people she believed in. This has given me a quiet but sure conviction to continue as a DIY practitioner and to thrive on the ethical energy that the practice of connection and attention brings.

Gilbertson was in her late seventies when she made *Jenny's Arctic diary* (1978). Women filmmakers, look what lies before us.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Ethics Approval Letter

UNIVERSITY of STIRLING

General University Ethics Panel (GUEP)
University of Stirling
Stirling
FK9 4LA
Scotland UK

E: GUEP@stir.ac.uk

Shona Main
Faculty of Arts & Humanities
University of Stirling
FK9 4LA

20 April 2018

Dear Shona

Re: Inside the shared space of documentarist and subject: a study of the quietly radical ideas and ethics of Jenny Gilbertson – GUEP 345A

Thank you for making the requested revisions to your submission of the above to the General University Ethics Panel. I am pleased to confirm that your application now has ethical approval.

Please note that should any of your proposal change, a further submission (amendment) to GUEP will be necessary.

Please ensure that your research complies with the University of Stirling policy on storage of research data http://www.stir.ac.uk/is/researchers/data/afteryourresearch/

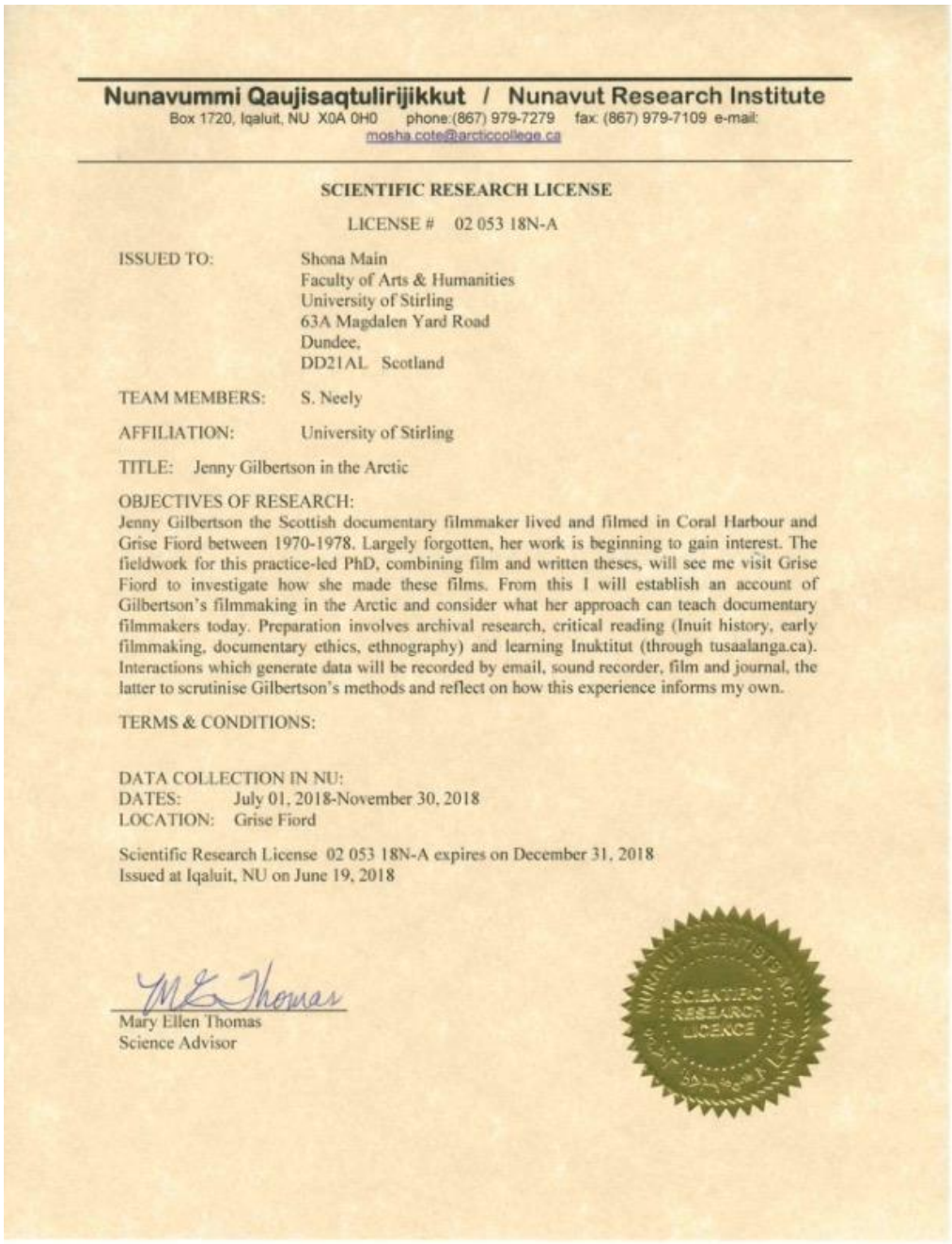
If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact the Committee by email to guep@stir.ac.uk.

Good luck with your research.

Yours sincerely,

p.p. On behalf of GUEP
Professor Helen Cheyne
Deputy Chair of GUEP

Appendix 2: Nunavut Research Institute (Scientific Research License granted)



Nunavummi Qaujisaqtulirijikkut / Nunavut Research Institute
Box 1720, Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0 phone:(867) 979-7279 fax: (867) 979-7109 e-mail: mosha.cote@arcticcollege.ca

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH LICENSE

LICENSE # 02 053 18N-A

ISSUED TO: Shona Main
Faculty of Arts & Humanities
University of Stirling
63A Magdalen Yard Road
Dundee,
DD21AL Scotland

TEAM MEMBERS: S. Neely

AFFILIATION: University of Stirling

TITLE: Jenny Gilbertson in the Arctic

OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH:
Jenny Gilbertson the Scottish documentary filmmaker lived and filmed in Coral Harbour and Grise Fiord between 1970-1978. Largely forgotten, her work is beginning to gain interest. The fieldwork for this practice-led PhD, combining film and written theses, will see me visit Grise Fiord to investigate how she made these films. From this I will establish an account of Gilbertson's filmmaking in the Arctic and consider what her approach can teach documentary filmmakers today. Preparation involves archival research, critical reading (Inuit history, early filmmaking, documentary ethics, ethnography) and learning Inuktitut (through tusaalanga.ca). Interactions which generate data will be recorded by email, sound recorder, film and journal, the latter to scrutinise Gilbertson's methods and reflect on how this experience informs my own.

TERMS & CONDITIONS:

DATA COLLECTION IN NU:
DATES: July 01, 2018-November 30, 2018
LOCATION: Grise Fiord

Scientific Research License 02 053 18N-A expires on December 31, 2018
Issued at Iqaluit, NU on June 19, 2018

M E Thomas
Mary Ellen Thomas
Science Advisor

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH LICENCE